

The Colossian Philosophy: A Confident Jewish Apologia

The debate regarding the character of the Colossian philosophy continues to rumble on. In the 1960s it seemed to be largely settled in favour of a form of Jewish-Gnostic syncretism, with E. Lohse's KEK volume summing up the consensus⁽¹⁾. Indeed, it was popular during this period to characterize Colossians as seeking to counter the gnostic soteriology/christology of the heretics with a more radically gnostic soteriology/christology⁽²⁾. Since then, however, the counter arguments mounted by F.O. Francis in particular have begun to swing the pendulum back in favour of a teaching more distinctively and characteristically Jewish as such⁽³⁾. The four most

(¹) E. LOHSE, *Die Briefe an die Kolosser und an Philemon* (KEK 9/2; Göttingen 1968).

(²) H.M. SCHENKE, "Der Widerstreit gnostischer und christlicher Christologie im Spiegel des Kolosserbriefes", *ZTK* 61 (1964) 391-403: 403; E. GRÄSSER, "Kol 3,1-4 als Beispiel einer Interpretation secundum homines recipientes", *ZTK* 64 (1967) 139-168: 152; H.-F. WEISS, "Gnostische Motive und antignostische Polemik im Kolosser- und im Epheserbrief", *Gnosis und Neues Testament* (Hrsg. K.W. TRÖGER) (Gütersloh 1973) 311-324: 315; J.J. GUNTHER, *St. Paul's Opponents and their Background* (NTS 35; Leiden 1973) 3-4 provides a fascinating listing of no less than 44 different suggestions made to identify Paul's opponents in Colossae, two-thirds of them envisaging some sort of syncretistic or gnostic mix.

(³) See particularly F.O. FRANCIS, "Humility and Angel Worship in Colossae", *Conflict at Colossae* (ed. F.O. FRANCIS - W.A. MEEKS) (Missoula 1973) 163-195; for the influence of Francis see e.g. N. KEHL, "Erniedrigung und Erhöhung in Qumran und Kolossä", *ZKT* 91 (1969) 364-394, especially 371-374; W. CARR, "Two Notes on Colossians", *JTS* 24 (1973) 492-500: 496-500; A.T. LINCOLN, *Paradise Now and Not Yet* (SNTSMS 43; Cambridge 1981) 112; P.T. O'BRIEN, *Colossians, Philemon* (WBC 44; Waco 1982) 141-145; C.A. EVANS, "The Colossian Mystics", *Bib* 63 (1982) 188-205; C. ROWLAND, "Apocalyptic Visions and the Exaltation of Christ in the Letter to the Colossians", *JSNT* 19 (1983) 78-83; W. WINK, *Naming the Powers* (Philadelphia 1984) 80, n.93; F.F. BRUCE, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids 1984) 22-26 (26: "an early form of merkabah mysticism"), who has changed his mind from his first edition (with E.K. SIMPSON), *The Epistles of Paul to the Ephesians and to the Colossians* (NLC;

recent studies of the question, however, show just how divided opinion continues to be on the subject. M. Wolter is still influenced by Lohse⁽⁴⁾, whereas J.-N. Aletti is more inclined to follow Francis⁽⁵⁾. A.J.M. Wedderburn has been influenced by E. Schweizer's thesis that the Colossian philosophy was a kind of "Jewish Pythagoreanism"⁽⁶⁾ and draws a parallel with the clearly syncretistic teaching of Elchasai which emerged in Syria about 50 years later⁽⁷⁾. And R. E. De Maris is also influenced by Schweizer but argues for a syncretistic blend of "popular Middle Platonic, Jewish and Christian elements that cohere around the pursuit of wisdom"⁽⁸⁾. So the jury is still out on the question.

This paper is written out of the conviction that the Colossian philosophy is best understood as a kind of Jewish mysticism and that important evidence in favour of this view from the letter itself has been neglected.

I

First, we need to recall that the Lycus valley cities had substantial Jewish minorities, stemming from the original settlement of Jews in Lydia and Phrygia by Antiochus the Great in the late third century BCE (Jos., *Ant.* 12,147-153). The fact that in 62 BCE (Cicero, *Flacc* 28,68)^(8a) more than twenty pounds of gold were

London 1957) 166, "a Judaism which had undergone a remarkable fusion with... an early and simple form of gnosticism"; and especially the whole thesis of T. J. SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption at Colossae* (JSNTSS 53; Sheffield 1991).

⁽⁴⁾ M. WOLTER, *Der Brief an die Kolosser. Der Brief an Philemon* (ÖTKNT 12; Gütersloh 1993) 155-162.

⁽⁵⁾ J.-N. ALETTI, *Saint Paul. Épître aux Colossiens* (EB; Paris 1993) 196-199, 211-213.

⁽⁶⁾ E. SCHWEIZER, *Der Brief an die Kolosser* (EKK; Zürich 1976) 103-104; also "Christianity of the Circumcised and Judaism of the Uncircumcised. The Background of Matthew and Colossians", *Jews, Greeks and Christians* (FS. W. D. Davies; [ed. R. HAMERTON-KELLY - R. SCROGGS] Leiden 1976) 245-260.

⁽⁷⁾ A. J. M. WEDDERBURN, "The Theology of Colossians", *The Theology of the Later Pauline Letters* (ed. A. J. M. WEDDERBURN - A. T. LINCOLN) (Cambridge 1993) 4-7.

⁽⁸⁾ R. E. DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy: Wisdom in Dispute at Colossae* (JSNTSS 96; Sheffield 1994) 17; see also 88-96, 103-104.

^(8a) M. STERN (ed.), *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, I (Jerusalem 1974) § 68.

collected from Jews in the area for the temple tax (indicating an adult male Jewish population probably in excess of 10,000)⁽⁹⁾ suggests that as many as two or three thousand Jews may have lived in Colossae — a significant ethnic minority. This would imply the presence of more than one συναγωγή or προσευχή in Colossae, and raises in turn the question of how the neophyte Christian house church(es) of Colossae were regarded by these synagogues — an issue central in the following analysis. But at least we can assume fairly confidently that the members of these various groups and their different practices would not be totally unknown to each other.

We cannot be sure how diverse these Jewish synagogues were, but very likely they reflected some of the diversity then current in late Second Temple Judaism. Thus, on the one hand, the continued payment of the temple tax indicates communities anxious to maintain their national ties to the homeland and its religious centre. We also know from Josephus and inscriptions that Jewish communities in Asia Minor were typically concerned to maintain the right to live according to their own laws, often with particular reference to sabbath and food laws. Of Colossae's two near Lycus valley neighbours, Laodicea features in one of these (Jos., *Ant.* 14,241-242), and a Jewish inscription from Hierapolis (*Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum*, 777) also mentions the feasts of Passover and Pentecost⁽¹⁰⁾. On the other hand, we know of a community of Samaritans on the island of Delos (in the Aegean) who called themselves "Israelites who pay first fruits to holy Mt. Gerizim"⁽¹¹⁾; Paul himself practised mystical ascent (2 Cor 12,1-7), presumably during his time in Cilicia (Gal 2,21; Acts 11,26); and the seer of Revelation's characteristically Jewish apocalyptic visions are said to have taken place in Patmos (Rev 1,9).

⁽⁹⁾ Other estimates include 7,500, 9,000 (*ABD* I, 1089 and IV, 230), more than 10,000 (BRUCE, *The Epistles*, 14), and more than 11,000 (J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *The Epistles of St Paul: Colossians and Philemon* [London 1875] 20-21).

⁽¹⁰⁾ P. TREBILCO, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor* (SNTSMS 69; Cambridge 1991) 12-19 and 199, n. 70; L. H. FELDMAN, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* (Princeton 1993) 70.

⁽¹¹⁾ E. SCHÜRER, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (rev. and ed. G. VERMES, F. MILLAR, et al.) (4 vols; Edinburgh 1973-87) III, 71.

As for the Colossian Jews' relations with their neighbours, we have to take care to avoid stereotypes unjustified historically. Thus we should not assume closed off communities; on the contrary the little evidence we have suggests Jewish communities well integrated into the social and business life of the cities where they lived⁽¹²⁾. Nor should we assume that these Jewish communities had succumbed to syncretistic influences, despite older claims to the contrary⁽¹³⁾; the evidence already noted, of diaspora concern to maintain Jewish identity, will be confirmed by the evidence of the letter itself. Nor, on the other hand, can we assume that the Jews of Colossae would have been vigorously evangelistic; on the whole, so far as we can tell, diaspora Jews were content to have their traditional ethnic religion's rights affirmed, though they also welcomed Gentiles who were attracted to their standards and praxis⁽¹⁴⁾. At the same time a tradition of Jewish apologetic within diaspora Judaism was already well established, Philo being only the most prominent example of a well-educated Jew using the categories and language of contemporary philosophy to demonstrate the rational and religious power of Judaism⁽¹⁵⁾.

⁽¹²⁾ TREBILCO, *Jewish Communities*, studies particularly Sardis, Acmonia and Apamea, all within a 150 mile radius of Colossae. On Aphrodisias see particularly J. REYNOLDS – R. TANNENBAUM, *Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias* (Cambridge Philological Society Supp 12; Cambridge 1987). On the level of social intercourse between Jews and Gentiles see e.g. S. J. D. COHEN, "Crossing the Boundary and Becoming a Jew", *HTR* 82 (1989) 13-33; E. P. SANDERS, "Jewish Association with Gentiles and Galatians 2,11-14", *Studies in Paul and John* (FS. J. L. Martyn; [ed. R. FORTNA – B. R. GAVENTA] Nashville 1990) 170-188; J. D. G. DUNN, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (BNTC; London 1993) 119-121. For the evidence relating to Hierapolis in particular see SCHÜRER, *The History of the Jewish People*, III, 27-28.

⁽¹³⁾ See BRUCE, *The Epistles*, 12-13; TREBILCO, *Jewish Communities*, ch. 6; FELDMAN, *Jew and Gentile*, 74.

⁽¹⁴⁾ On the lack of missionary outreach (proselytizing zeal) within the Judaism of the period see S. MCKNIGHT, *A Light Among the Gentiles: Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period* (Minneapolis 1991) and M. GOODMAN, "Jewish proselytizing in the first century", *The Jews Among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire* (ed. J. LIEU et al.) (London 1992) 53-78. On God-fearers (or God-worshippers) in Asia Minor see e.g. TREBILCO, *Jewish Communities*, ch. 7.

⁽¹⁵⁾ See particularly the wisdom and philosophical literature and fragments of lost Judeo-Hellenistic works in J. H. CHARLESWORTH, *The Old*

How does all this bear on the character of the Colossian philosophy? Not directly, of course. But it does indicate a context of plausibility for the view that the Colossian philosophy alluded to in Col 2,8 was characteristically Jewish. Above all it becomes important to remember that the reality of Christian presence was probably of a small, recently formed (mixed?) group of Jews and Gentiles, claiming to believe in a Jewish Messiah, in the face of or despite a much older, larger, well established and possibly well respected Jewish community. The warning against *πιθανολογία* in 2,4 is clearly a reaction against the danger of the letter's readers succumbing to an all too plausible sounding argument or apologia. One could well imagine a hostile criticism levelled against a Philo or Aristobulus or Aristeas or 4 Maccabees using such a line of attack: that which attempts to be a compelling demonstration (*ἀπόδειξις*) is merely a set of "specious arguments" (cf. Plato, *Theat.* 162E; similarly Aristotle, *EthNic* 1,3,4; Epictetus 1,8,7; Philo, *Cher.* 9). Precisely the same inference may be drawn from 2,8. The presentation of Judaism as a kind of "philosophy" was already a familiar ploy in Jewish apologetics (e.g. Aristeas 256; 4 Macc 5,22-24; Philo, *MutNom* 223; *VitCont* 26; Jos., *Ant.* 18,11.23)⁽¹⁶⁾. Its potential appeal to God-fearing Gentiles would be well caught in the hostile image of *συλαγωγεῖν* ("carry off captive")⁽¹⁷⁾, and the echo of Mark 7,8 in the derogatory "empty deceit in accordance with the tradition of human beings" (*τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων*) may be more than coincidental.

Again it should be stressed that none of this constitutes proof that the Colossian philosophy was essentially Jewish in character or rooted in the Colossian synagogue(s). But when we read 2,16 and 2,18 in the light of the above information, and the indications that there were those in Colossae who criticised or condemned the new Jesus Messiah sect (*μὴ τις ὑμᾶς κρινέτω* - 2,16) and who judged

Testament Pseudepigrapha (2 vols; New York 1983, 1985) II, 477-606, 775-919, and C. R. HOLLADAY, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors* (3 vols; Atlanta 1983, 1989, 1994); see also J. J. COLLINS, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora* (New York 1983).

⁽¹⁶⁾ See O. MICHEL, *TDNT* VIII, 181-182; DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy*, 48-49.

⁽¹⁷⁾ N. T. WRIGHT, *The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon* (TNTC; Leicester 1986) 100 suggests that "a contemptuous pun with the word *synagogue*" (*συναγωγή/συλαγωγῶν*) is intended.

them to be disqualified (μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς καταβραβεύετω - 2,18), it is not difficult or ill-judged to envisage a Jewish synagogue community or representative, conscious of the Jewish community's age and respectability, thus speaking dismissively of a (quasi-)Jewish sect so recently arrived on the scene.

II

When we look more closely at the internal evidence of the letter itself, it begins to become clear how well that evidence fits into the plausible context just sketched.

Here the self-understanding of the young church in Colossae as it comes to expression in the letter is important. Two verses in particular stand out. The first (1,12) highlights the striking fact that Gentile converts to the new sect were understood to be thus "qualified or made fit" (ἱκανώσαντι) to share in an inheritance for which they had previously been unqualified, that is, an inheritance thought to be exclusively Israel's⁽¹⁸⁾. Certainly the phrase "the share of the inheritance of the saints" (τὴν μερίδα τοῦ κλήρου τῶν ἁγίων) is unmistakably Jewish in character. And for anyone familiar with the Jewish scriptures it would immediately evoke the characteristic talk of the promised land and of Israel as God's inheritance⁽¹⁹⁾. Particularly notable is the way the language could be transferred to the eschatological hope of share in the resurrection and/or life beyond death in the eternal life of heaven (Dan 12,13; Wis 5,5; *Shemoneh 'Esreh* 13; cf. *1 Enoch* 48,7). Most striking of all are the parallels in the DSS, 1QS 11,7-8: "God has given them (wisdom, knowledge, righteousness, power, glory) to his chosen ones as an everlasting possession, and has caused them to inherit the lot of the saints"; 1QH 11,10-12: "For the sake of your glory you have purified man of sin that he may be holy for you ... that he may be one [with] the children of your truth and partake of the lot of your saints"⁽²⁰⁾.

⁽¹⁸⁾ J. H. FRIEDRICH, *EWNT* 2 (1981) 737-739.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Num 18,20; Deut 10,9; 12,12; 18,1; 32,9; Josh 14,3-4; 18,6-7; 19,9,49,51; Jer 10,16; 12,9-10; 51,19; Sir 24,12; 44,23; 45,22; cf. 2 Sam 20,1; 1 Kgs 12,16. See further W. FOERSTER - J. HERRMANN, *TDNT* III, 759-761, 769-776; J. D. HESTER, *Paul's Concept of Inheritance* (SJT Occasional Papers No. 14; Edinburgh 1968).

⁽²⁰⁾ For Qumran's more predestinarian use of the same language see again LOHSE, *Die Briefe*, 70-71.

The other noteworthy verse is 3,12, where again the claim is made in effect that the new sect consisting mainly (solely?) of Gentiles has somehow become participant in Israel, "elect of God, holy and beloved". As with the terms used in 1,12 the language of Jewish self-identity would be unmistakable for anyone familiar with the Jewish scriptures, and not least to the Jews of Colossae. The term ἐκλεκτός is familiar enough in Greek, but the idea of a people "chosen of God" is wholly and exclusively Jewish, a fundamental feature of Israel's self-perception. So too with ἅγιοι, for the people of Israel as a whole were quite often called "the holy ones/saints" in Jewish literature (e.g. Ps 16,3; 34,9; Dan 7,18; 8,24; Tob 8,15; Wis 18,9; also Qumran: 1QSb 3,2 and 1QM 3,5)⁽²¹⁾. And though the idea of one beloved of the gods is also familiar outside the Judeo-Christian tradition⁽²²⁾, it is again a particular emphasis in Jewish self-understanding (e.g. Deut 32,15; 33,26; Isa 5,1,7; 44,2; Jer 12,7; 31,3; Bar 3,37). The phrasing is so concentrated and has not yet become conventional, so that the allusions must be deliberate and could hardly have been unnoticed by the recipients. The echo of the classic covenant text, Deut 7,6-7, in particular, is striking⁽²³⁾. More clearly than anywhere else in Colossians it is evident that the Gentile recipients of the letter were being invited to consider themselves as full participants in the people and heritage of Israel.

What the members of the Colossian synagogue(s) made of such language (1,12; 3,12) being thus appropriated by the new sect of Χριστιανοί would be fascinating to know. A denunciation and pronouncement of disqualification (as in 2,16 and 18) would be a natural riposte. In which case we should note that the response of the Colossian Jews was not like that of the Galatian "Judaizers". In the latter case the concern was to convert again, or to convert more fully (make proselytes) the Gentile believers (Gal 5,1-12). At Colossae (if 2,16 and 2,18 are any guide) the reaction was to dismiss these Gentiles' claim to a share in Israel's heritage as fanciful and unfounded. The impression of a Jewish apologia, confident of Israel's privileged status before the one

⁽²¹⁾ See further *ABD* III, 238-239.

⁽²²⁾ Cf. Dio Chrys 3,60; BAGD, ἀγαπάω 1 d.

⁽²³⁾ See further WOLTER, *Der Brief an die Kolosser*, 184.

God and consequently dismissive of would-be claimants to share in that status, begins to gain in attractiveness as a workable historical explanation.

III

Another indicator of the Jewish character of the Colossian philosophy is the prominence given to the theme of circumcision in the letter. The significance of this feature is not easy to grasp at first since it is introduced in a clause whose meaning is not at once self-evident — “you were circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hand” (2,11). But if we ask why this image should be used at all the answer points directly to the Jewish character of the claims made by the new sect. Circumcision was well recognized as a distinctively Jewish rite and mark (e.g. Jos., *Ant.* 1,192; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5,5,2)⁽²⁴⁾. In such circumstances a claim to have been circumcised was in effect a claim to Jewish status. Moreover, a claim to spiritual (ἀχειροποίητος)⁽²⁵⁾ circumcision could hardly be heard as other than an intra-Jewish claim, if not, indeed, as an intra-Jewish factional claim. For it picks up the distinctively Jewish recognition that the distinctively Jewish rite, circumcision in the flesh, was not in itself sufficient, but needed to be matched by circumcision of the heart (e.g. Deut 10,16; Jer 4,4; 1QpHab 11,13; 1QS 5,5; *Jub* 1,23; Philo, *SpecLeg* 1,305). Who would make such a claim but those who valued circumcision for its religious significance? And what is the point of a claim to spiritual circumcision if not to claim a status in advance of or as fulfilment of the status marked by circumcision in the flesh?

The same characteristically Jewish attitude lies behind the other references to circumcision in Colossians. The disparaging note of 2,13 — “the uncircumcision of your flesh” — should not be taken as “the uncircumcision which is your flesh”, with “flesh”

⁽²⁴⁾ See further e.g. J. D. G. DUNN, “What was the Issue between Paul and Those of the Circumcision?”, *Paulus und das antike Judentum* (Hrsg. M. HENGEL – U. HECKEL) (WUNT 58; Tübingen 1991) 295-313; particularly 303-305).

⁽²⁵⁾ See now the inscription cited by P. W. VAN DER HORST, “A New Altar of a Godfearer?”, *JJS* 43 (1992), reprinted in his *Hellenism-Judaism-Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction* (Kampen 1994) 65-72.

understood as a moral category (as in *NEB*, “morally uncircumcised” and *NIV*, “the uncircumcision of your sinful nature”)(²⁶). Rather it echoes the classic description of circumcision as marking God’s covenant with Israel (Gen 17,11-14: “So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant”), a characteristic echo in Pauline usage (Rom 2,28; Gal 6,12-13; Phil 3,3-5). “The uncircumcision of your flesh” means simply “your status as Gentiles”, primarily an ethnic distinction. And it is a distinction which unavoidably indicates a Jewish perspective; who else would categorise peoples as “uncircumcision” and evaluate uncircumcision as a negative identity factor? The thought in fact is very close to that of Eph 2,11: “Gentiles in the flesh, those called ‘uncircumcision’ by the so-called ‘circumcision’ made by human hand in the flesh”. And the claim is again that the Colossian believers have now been effectively delivered from their hitherto defective status as Gentiles.

The point is confirmed by the third reference to circumcision in the letter, Col 3,11, which repeats the distinctively Pauline claim that with Christ “there is no ‘circumcision’ and ‘uncircumcision’”. Here again it is a matter of removing labels which categorised non-Jews into a disadvantaged status by definition, and where again it is circumcision/non-circumcision which provided the primary and crucial differentiation. What is remarkable here is the way the formulaic confession has been adapted (cf. 1 Cor 12,13; Gal 3,28), viz. by doubling the affirmation that the significance of the division between Jew and Gentile has been abolished, “not any Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision”. Unless we are to assume that the variations in the use of this confessional statement are purely arbitrary, the particular variation here can only mean that the surmounting and abolition of that division was a factor of great importance for the Colossian church. This suggests in turn, once again, that integral to the problems faced by the Colossian church was a reaffirmation by the Colossian Jews of their continuing disadvantaged, disqualified status, and of circumcision as a continuing mark of Jewish privileged status as the elect of God.

It would, of course, be possible to argue that such references to circumcision are purely echoes of earlier Pauline arguments without significance for our understanding of the Colossian philosophy. That might be persuasive in the case of one such allusion to circumcision,

(²⁶) So most commentators.

and even two might be discounted as merely coincidental. But with such repeated references and the added weight given to the point in 3,11, not forgetting that 3,12 (see §II above) follows on immediately, it surely strains credulity to deny that circumcision and the distinction between Jews and Gentiles as between "the circumcision" and "the uncircumcision" was an important factor in the challenge confronting the Colossian church. And that must mean a challenge mounted by Jews, and presumably by Colossian Jews. The possibility that a syncretistic group of Gentiles had taken up circumcision as a rite or spiritual value cannot be excluded⁽²⁷⁾. But even so it is doubtful whether it could have assumed such importance as to be the identity marker which distinguished the insiders ("the circumcision") from all others ("the uncircumcision"). Whereas the same distinction is so characteristically Jewish that to look for an alternative explanation runs directly counter to the obvious line of historical reconstruction. In short, the attitude expressed in the distinction "circumcision/uncircumcision" is that of ethnic identity, and not some individualistic or syncretistic ritualism.

IV

A further indicator of the Jewish character of the Colossian philosophy are the clearest indications of specific teaching of the philosophy in the letter, in 2,16 and 22: "Therefore do not let anyone pass judgment on you over food and drink, or in the matter of festival, or new moon, or sabbaths"; "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle".

The first (2,16) indicates a high value put upon dietary requirements. And though restrictions on diet were not confined to Jews in the ancient world⁽²⁸⁾, it is an undoubted fact that the food laws were fundamental and defining features of Jewish identity (1 Macc 1,62-63; Dan 1,3-16; 10,3; Tob 1,10-12; Jdt 12,2.19; Add Esth 14,17; *Joseph and Asenath* 7,1; 8,5), and that the same laws were a

(27) Cf. W. FOERSTER, "Die Irrlehrer des Kolosserbriefes", *Studia Biblica et Semitica* (FS. T. C. Vriezen) (Wageningen 1966) 71-80: 73; against LOHSE, *Die Briefe*, 153, and A. LINDEMANN, *Der Kolosserbrief* (ZBK: Zürich 1983) 42. See further below.

(28) See e.g. WOLTER, *Der Brief an die Kolosser*, 141-142.

critical issue in the early Christian mission in determining whether and to what extent Gentiles could be counted acceptable companions in table-fellowship (Acts 10,14; 11,3; Gal 2,11-14)⁽²⁹⁾. The use of the words “clean” and “unclean” in Rom 14,14 and 20 confirms that it was primarily Jewish sensibilities which were in view there⁽³⁰⁾, and the use of the same terms βρώσις and πόσις here suggests that the same factors and concerns are in view in Colossians. It is true that drink was not such an issue as clean/unclean food, but it was quite natural for scrupulous Jews (particularly in the diaspora) to exercise restraint here too because of the possibility of being given wine which had been offered in libation to the gods and which therefore also was contaminated by idolatry (Dan 1,3-16; 10,3; Add Esth 14,17; *Joseph and Asenath* 8,5; m. AZ 2,3; 5,2)⁽³¹⁾.

The already strong implication that the Colossian “philosophy” was basically Jewish in character is further strengthened by the other items over which the Colossian believers might be criticised or condemned, and which we may likewise deduce were central to the Colossian “philosophy” — “in the matter of a festival or new moon or sabbath”. The first two terms are unspecific: such festivals were common to all societies⁽³²⁾; and the new moon was reckoned to have a religious significance and celebrated accordingly in most ancient societies⁽³³⁾. However the issue is put beyond doubt by the third element, the “sabbath”, whose distinctively Jewish character is again beyond dispute, again, not least, as a mark of Jewish identity (Exod 31,16-17; Deut 5,15; Isa 56,6; cf. *Jub* 2,17-33; 50,6-13; CD 10,14-

⁽²⁹⁾ Such Jewish scruples were well known in the ancient world (see e.g. STERN, *Greek and Latin Authors*, I, §§ 63, 196, 258, 281, 301). Further factors affecting Jewish eating were the kosher laws requiring that the blood be properly drained from an animal fit for food (e.g. Lev 7,26-27; Deut 12,16.23-24), and the fear prominent among diaspora Jews of eating meat which came from an animal sacrificed in a Gentile temple which therefore would be contaminated by idolatry (see e.g. SCHÜRER, *The History of the Jewish People*, II, 81-83).

⁽³⁰⁾ See further J.D.G. DUNN, *Romans* (WBC 38; Dallas 1988) 799-801, 818-819.

⁽³¹⁾ As WINK, *Naming the Powers*, notes, the Essenes regarded drink as more susceptible to contamination than food (80, n.91).

⁽³²⁾ LSJ, ἐορτή.

⁽³³⁾ See further G. DELLING, *TDNT* IV, 639-641.

11,18; Mark 2,23–3,5 par.; Philo, *Mos.* 2,21; Jos., *Ant.* 11,346; *Ap.* 2,282; Juvenal, *Sat.* 14,96). And when we recall that “sabbaths, new moons and feasts” was a regular Jewish way of speaking of the main festivals of Jewish religion (1 Chr 23,31; 2 Chr 2,3; 31,3; Neh 10,33; Isa 1,13–14; 1 Macc 10,34; Ezek 45,17 and Hos 2,11 in reverse order, as here)⁽³⁴⁾, the most obvious conclusion is that all the elements in this verse bear a characteristically and distinctively Jewish colour. The corollary is equally obvious: that those who cherished these festivals and traditions so devoutly must have been the (or at least some) Jews of Colossae; and that the criticism here (μὴ τις ὑμᾶς κρινέτω) again implies a Jewish suspicion of Gentiles making what they would regard as unacceptable claims to Israel’s distinctive heritage without taking on all that was most distinctive of that heritage.

The same conclusions are probably to be drawn from 2,21 (μὴ ἄψη μηδὲ γεύσῃ μηδὲ θίγῃς), for again the regulations quoted (they could be put in quotation marks) are all to do with purity and food. “Ἀπτομαι, “touch, take hold of”, must denote a purity concern⁽³⁵⁾; behind it lies fear of defilement by physical contact with something forbidden, fear of impurity being transferred by physical contact (as regularly in Lev 5,2–3; 7,19.21; 11,8.24–28; etc.; also Isa 52,11 cited in 2 Cor 6,17). That the concern relates primarily to unclean food⁽³⁶⁾ may be confirmed by the second regulation: γεύομαι, “taste, partake of” food⁽³⁷⁾ (as in Matt 27,34; Luke 14,24; John 2,9; Acts 10,10; 20,11; 23,14; only here in Pauline corpus). The third prohibition could again refer to food⁽³⁸⁾, but again probably means “touch” (with the hand)⁽³⁹⁾, and again indicates primarily a purity concern. Not insignificant is the fact that it is just these warnings which are chosen to illustrate the decrees/regulations (δογματίζεσθε) by which the Colossian “philosophy” thought it necessary to regulate this life (2,20), and not great moral rules such as those listed in 3,5 and 8.

⁽³⁴⁾ See e.g. SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, 163 and ALETTI, *Colossiens*, 193, n. 112.

⁽³⁵⁾ E. LOHMEYER, *Die Briefe an die Philipper, an die Kolosser und an Philemon* (KEK 9; Göttingen ¹³1964) 128.

⁽³⁶⁾ BAGD, ἄπτω 2a.

⁽³⁷⁾ BAGD, γεύομαι.

⁽³⁸⁾ See again BAGD, ἄπτω 2a.

⁽³⁹⁾ LSJ, θιγγάνω 1.

In themselves, these regulations could of course indicate the ritual practices of more than one of the ancient religions and cults. But here again the echo of characteristically Jewish concerns is strong, and particularly purity concerns, though the point is missed by almost all commentators⁽⁴⁰⁾. The danger of impurity by touch is a prominent feature in the Torah (Lev 13,45-46; 15; Num 19,11-13); in fact, touching human impurity of whatever sort made one impure (Lev 5,3)⁽⁴¹⁾. And the distinction between clean and unclean (food) is essentially a purity distinction. Purity concerns were widely shared by Jews of the late Second Temple period, as the discovery of many *mikwaot* in pre-70 Jerusalem and Judea clearly attests⁽⁴²⁾. They lie behind such episodes as Mark 5,1-34 and Luke 10,30-32 in the Gospels. Pharisees seem to have been still more concerned with purity, as their very nickname (Pharisees = "separated ones") indicates, a concern focused most sharply on the meal table⁽⁴³⁾. Such concerns were even more prominent at Qumran (1QS 6-7), and not least in their understanding of worship (11QT 47; 4Q400 1,i,14). Perhaps most striking of all is the evidence of Isa 65,5 LXX and *Test. Mos.* 7,9-10 that warnings against impurity by touch, and in terms similar to those used here⁽⁴⁴⁾, were a feature of the interfactional polemic within Second Temple Judaism.

Such emphasis on purity would, of course, be more prominent among those who lived in the "holy" land. But concern among diaspora Jews regarding corpse impurity is attested in Philo, *SpecLeg* 3,205-206, and for regular purification in *Sib. Or.* 3,592-

⁽⁴⁰⁾ J. ERNST, *Die Briefe an die Philipper, an Philemon, an die Kolosser, an die Epheser* (RNT; Regensburg 1974) 213 is an exception. P. POKORNY, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Kolosser* (THNT 10/1; Berlin 1987) 129 does at least note that "für die Gnostiker... war die Einhaltung von Speisevorschriften zwar nicht bezeichnend".

⁽⁴¹⁾ For full details see E. P. SANDERS, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah* (London 1990) 137-139.

⁽⁴²⁾ SANDERS, *Jewish Law*, 214-227.

⁽⁴³⁾ This is the consensus view, though challenged by Sanders; see J. D. G. DUNN, *The Partings of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism* (London 1991) 41-42.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Isa 65,5 LXX: "They say, 'Keep away from me; do not come near me, for I am pure'"; *Test. Mos.* 7,9-10: "They, with hand and mind, will touch impure things, yet their mouths will speak enormous things, and they will even say, 'Do not touch me, lest you pollute me in the position I occupy ...'". See also m. Mak 3,7-8, cited by Str-B III, 629.

593. Most striking here is the explanation given by Aristeeas 142 for the law of Moses: "So, to prevent our being perverted by contact with others or by mixing with bad influences, he hedged us in on all sides with purifications connected with meat and drink and touch (περιέφραξεν ἀγνείαις καὶ διὰ βρωτῶν καὶ ποτῶν καὶ ἁφῶν) and hearing and sight in terms of the law (νομικῶς)". The same combination of food and touch as here is notable. And the echoes in Col 2,21 of the interfactional polemic attested elsewhere within Judaism strongly suggest, once again, that the proponents of the Colossian philosophy were most likely diaspora Jews who were anxious to preserve the purity they regarded as necessary both to maintain their status as God's people, set apart by such purity rules from other nations, and to secure access to God's presence in their worship.

Some have attempted to explain the evidence just reviewed (§§ II-IV) as the Jewish elements of a syncretistic mix. For example, Schweizer speaks of "eine nur jüdisch verbrämte Weltanschauung"⁽⁴⁵⁾; E. Stegemann of "ein paar jüdischen 'Versatzstücken' mit dem Judentum nichts zu tun"⁽⁴⁶⁾; and Gnllka of "ein jüdisches Gehäuse ... mit fremdem Geist erfüllt"⁽⁴⁷⁾. But such explanations simply fail to do justice to the evidence. For a perspective which divides the world into "the circumcision" and "the uncircumcision", and which regards sabbath and festivals, purity and food laws as demarcating the acceptable from the unacceptable is characteristically Jewish overall and distinctively Jewish in its identity markers. It was the adoption of precisely these practices which was designated as "Judaizing" within both Jewish and Christian writings (Esther 8,17 LXX; Theodotus in *Praep. Evang.* 9,22,5; Gal 2,4; Jos., *War*

⁽⁴⁵⁾ SCHWEIZER, *Der Brief an die Kolosser*, 101.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ E. STEGEMANN, "Alt und Neu bei Paulus und in den Deuteropaulinen (Kol-Eph)", *EvT* 37 (1977) 508-536: 530.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ J. GNILKA, *Der Kolosserbrief* (HTKNT 10/1; Freiburg 1980) 168. The most recent discussions of the opponents in Colossae pursue essentially the same line: ascetic visionaries who have drawn on Judaism for some aspects of their teachings (J. SUMNEY, "Those Who 'Pass Judgment': The Identity of the Opponents in Colossians", *Bib* 74 [1993] 366-388: 386) or a syncretistic blend of "popular Middle Platonic, Jewish and Christian elements that cohere around the pursuit of wisdom" (DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy*, 17).

2,454; *Ant.* 20,38-46). As W. Schenk observes, calendar piety, food laws and circumcision cannot be regarded as random elements of some syncretistic cult, but are the very norms which provide and confirm the identity of Israel⁽⁴⁸⁾. In other words, the number of distinctively and definitively Jewish features are such that it is scarcely possible to envisage the Colossian “philosophy” as a non-Jewish core which has attracted Jewish elements. The hypothesis of a syncretistic religious philosophy with only some Jewish elements is both unnecessary and highly implausible.

V

We have so far neglected the two passages which have generally been regarded as the strongest evidence of the syncretism of the Colossian philosophy: the references to τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου in 2,8 and 20, and to ἡ θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων in 2,18.

In the first case it is certainly most natural to read the phrase in the context of these two verses as referring to a key feature of the Colossian philosophy. But what precisely it was has never been successfully clarified. The overwhelming probability is that the primary reference of the phrase is to the elemental substances of which the cosmos was composed (earth, water, air and fire) (as in

⁽⁴⁸⁾ W. SCHENK, “Der Kolosserbrief in der neueren Forschung (1945-1985)”, *ANRW* 2,25.4 (1987) 3327-3364: 3351-3353: “Genau diese drei Elemente sind nicht etwa eingeschränkt als irgendwelche ‘Kult-’ oder ‘Ritualgesetze’ zu klassifizieren, sondern es geht gerade um diejenigen Normen, die der Absonderung, Identität und Bestätigung der Zugehörigkeit zu Israel dienen und die jedem Außenstehenden augenfällig waren”. Several, e.g., LOHSE, *Die Briefe*, 189, n.1, point out that the concept “law” is absent from Colossians. But since the law’s most prominent features for diaspora Jews (circumcision, food laws, sabbaths, and purity regulations) are specifically mentioned (2,11.13.16.20-21) the fact that the term “law” itself is lacking is of no great moment. And the δόγματα of Col 2,14 must include a reference to the law (the term is so used in 3 Macc 1,3; Philo, *LegAll* 1,55; *Gig.* 52; Jos., *Ap.* 1,42), since they allude to the halakhic rulings in 2.16.21-22, also referred to by the equivalent verb (δογματίζω - 2,20) (cf. LIGHTFOOT, *The Epistles of St Paul*, 185; M. DIBELIUS, *An die Kolosser, Epheser, an Philemon* (revised by H. Greeven) (HNT 12; Tübingen ³1953) 32; SCHWEIZER, *Der Brief an die Kolosser*, 116; GNILKA, *Der Kolosserbrief*, 139; SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, 218-220. See also Wright’s more robust rebuttal of the point (WRIGHT, *The Epistles of Paul*, 25-26).

Wis 7,17 and 2 Pet 3,10.12), by far the most common usage in literature prior to Paul⁽⁴⁹⁾. However, as Philo knew well, these could be understood (mythologised or personified) as spirits or given the names of deities (*VitCont* 3; *Decal.* 53). "The divinization of the elements was a commonplace in the whole Graeco-Roman period" ⁽⁵⁰⁾.

It is true that the use of στοιχεῖα to denote heavenly bodies, the stars, understood as heavenly powers which influence or determine human destiny, is not attested until after our period (*Test. Sol.* 8,2-4; *Diog. Laert.* 6,102). But it is a natural extension of the more established use, since stars were understood to be composed of one of the elements, fire. Thus, in condemnatory tone, Wis 13,2: "they (Gentiles generally) supposed that either fire or wind or swift air, or the circle of the stars, or turbulent water, or the luminaries of heaven were the gods that rule the world". Philo described the στοιχεῖα as "powers" (*AetMund* 107-109), and Hermas, *Vis.* 3,13,3, speaks of the world controlled (κρατεῖται) through the four στοιχεῖα⁽⁵¹⁾. And both here and in Galatians there is a clear implication that the στοιχεῖα were closely associated with heavenly

⁽⁴⁹⁾ See further particularly J. BLINZLER, "Lexikalisches zu dem Terminus τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου bei Paulus", *Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus Internationalis Catholicus 1961* (AnBib 17-18; Rome 1963) II, 429-443; E. SCHWEIZER, "Die 'Elemente der Welt'. Gal 4,3.9; Kol 2,8.20", *Verborum Veritas* (FS.G. Stählin; [Hrsg. O. BÖCHER - K. HAACKER] Wuppertal 1970) 245-259, reprinted in *Beiträge zur Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Zürich 1970) 149-163; also "Slaves of the Elements and Worshipers of Angels: Gal 4,3.9 and Col 2,8.18.20", *JBL* 107 (1988) 455-468: 456-464; D. RUSAM, "Neue Belege zu den στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (Gal 4,3.9; Kol 2,8.20)", *ZNW* 83 (1992) 119-125. A minority continues to uphold the traditional interpretation: rudimentary ideas or "elementary teaching", as in Heb 5,12 (so C.F. D. MOULE, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* [CGTC; Cambridge 1957] 91-92; W. CARR, *Angels and Principalities* [SNTSMS 42; Cambridge 1981] 75-76; SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, 169; "the basic forces of the world, namely the law and the flesh": A. J. BANDSTRA, *The Law and the Elements of the World. An Exegetical Study in Aspects of Paul's Teaching* [Kampen 1964] 68-72). Despite the evidence which he himself notes, DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy*, argues rather woodenly for the meaning "first principles" (73,79-83).

⁽⁵⁰⁾ WINK, *Naming the Powers*, 74.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Cited also by DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy*, 53-55.

beings (Gal 4,8-9: gods as popularly understood; Col 2,10: rulers and authorities)⁽⁵²⁾.

It is not unimportant in all this to note that the issue here does not turn on any personal/impersonal distinction: it was commonplace, not least within Judaism, to think of the stars as living beings (Judg 5,20; Job 38,7; Dan 8,10; *1 Enoch* 86; Philo, *Opif.* 73; *Plant.* 12; Rev 1,20; 9,1); likewise "fate" could be personified ("the Fates") or attributed to a personal δαίμων⁽⁵³⁾. The allusion, in other words, is to the no doubt then common (as still among not a few today) belief that human beings had to live their lives under the influence or sway of primal and cosmic forces, however precisely conceptualised⁽⁵⁴⁾.

Particularly relevant is the fact that precisely the same phrase is used in Gal 4,3 and 9. There it is clearly linked into the Jewish law, understood as itself a kind of power set in charge over Israel like a slave-custodian or guardian (Gal 3,23-25; 4,1-3.9-10), and given "through angels" (3,19). The close association of the thought here with talk of Jewish festivals (Col 2,16; cf. Gal 4,10) and "angel-worship" (Col 2,18) strongly suggests that we are moving in the same realm of thought and association as with the same phrase in Galatians⁽⁵⁵⁾. Here it needs to be remembered that Jewish apocalyptic also spoke of spirits controlling the elements: e.g. *Jub* 2,2: "the angels of the spirit of fire, the angels of the spirit of the winds..."; *1 Enoch* 75,1: "the leaders of the chiefs of thousands who are in charge of all the stars"; *2 Enoch* 4,1: "the rulers of the stellar orders... the angels who govern the stars"; *Test. Abr.* 13,11: "the archangel Purouel, who has authority over fire"⁽⁵⁶⁾. *1 Enoch*

⁽⁵²⁾ For further details see BAGD, στοιχεῖον 2-4; G. DELLING, *TDNT* VII, 672-683; LOHSE, *Die Briefe*, 146-150; GNILKA, *Der Kolosserbrief*, 124-126. BRUCE, *The Epistles*, 99-100 suggests that use of the phrase in relation to heavenly bodies may have been "an original Pauline contribution to religious vocabulary" (cf. E. PLÜMACHER, *EWNT* 3 [1983] 665), a possibility for which most recently WOLTER, *Der Brief an die Kolosser*, 123-124 makes no allowance.

⁽⁵³⁾ "Fare", *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford 21970); LSJ, δαίμων.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ For an effective summary of the case see R. P. MARTIN, *Colossians and Philemon* (NCB; London 1974) 10-14.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ The more the concern for observance of days is linked to a lifestyle determined by reference to the "elemental forces" (2,8.20) (as LOHSE, *Die Briefe*, 170-171) the closer the parallel with Gal 4,9-10.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ LOHSE, *Die Briefe*, 148 cites *1 Enoch* 43,1-2 and *2 Enoch* 19,1-4.

18,14-16 also speaks of stars bound and imprisoned for their transgression; and the Greek fragment of *Jub* 2,8 links “the placings of the stars” with τὰ στοιχεῖα (καὶ τὰς τῶν ἄστρον θέσεις καὶ τὰ στοιχεῖα). We might also note that some fragmentary horoscopes have been discovered among the DSS (4Q186 and 4Q534MessAr), that one of the ways in which Hellenistic Jewish apologists sought to commend Judaism was by presenting the Jewish patriarchs as the discoverers of astrology (Artapanus and Ps-Eupolemus in Eusebius, *Praep. Evang.* 9,18,1 and 9,17,8-9), and that Josephus could describe the Pharisees and the Essenes in particular as believers in Fate (*Ant.* 13,172) and even claim that the Essenes prayed to the sun (*War* 2,128).

It is quite possible, then, to conceive of an essentially Jewish “philosophy” in Colossae which drew on such traditions as a way of commending Jewish religious practices to their fellow residents. The relative proximity of Colossae and Galatia in the Anatolian hinterland may even suggest that τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου was a characteristic feature of the apologia of Jewish synagogues in the region — that observance of the law, particularly sabbath and other festivals, was a way of living free of the malevolent influence of the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου. In response to which, Colossians, like Galatians, attempts to turn the tables by in effect arguing that observance of the Jewish calendar is just as much a rule of life determined by the στοιχεῖα — a “vain deceit”, because κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων meant also κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, a life-style quite opposed to one κατὰ Χριστόν (2,8). In contrast, it was a sharing in Christ’s death which brought freedom from τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (2,20). There was thus no need whatsoever to feel threatened or overawed by, still less enticed by, such characteristically Jewish traditions.

VI

The other passage on which a hypothesis of (Jewish) syncretism has been chiefly built has been 2,18. The attitude of disqualifying judgment, a feature, evidently, of the Colossian philosophy, is attributed to one “who delights in ταπεινοφροσύνη and θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων”. To be noted at once is the fact that the verb (θέλων) indicates something desired or wanted by the subject of the verb, that is, the practitioner of the philosophy. In the absence of a

following personal pronoun (ὁμας or ὁμῖν) together with an appropriate verb (infinitive or subjunctive), the θέλων cannot signify something imposed on the Colossian Christians or required of them⁽⁵⁷⁾. In fact, as Lightfoot and others have noted, θέλων ἐν is a Hebraism, reflecting the familiar *hāpēs bē* in LXX (1 Sam 18,22; 2 Sam 15,26; 1 Kgs 10,9; 2 Chr 9,8; Pss 111,1; 146,10; TestAsh 1,6)⁽⁵⁸⁾. In other words, what is about to be described is what the other sets as *his own* goal, or relishes as the means of achieving that goal, not a goal or means of achieving it which he sets before or wishes to impose upon the Colossian Christians⁽⁵⁹⁾. The attitude is simply that “my way is superior to yours; it achieves goals which you fall short of”. It is, we might say, an essentially sectarian attitude which is so confident of its rightness and success that any other system, including especially those most closely related to it, has to be judged at best inadequate if not dangerously defective.

What then does this critic delight in? Ταπεινοφροσύνη usually means “humility”, but most follow the observation that the LXX uses the repeated phrase “to humble (ταπεινώ) one’s soul” in the sense of “to mortify oneself” (Lev 16,29.31; 23,27.29.32) or more specifically “to fast” (Ps 35,13; Isa 58,3.5; Jdt 4,9; see also Ps 69,10 and PssSol 3,8); ταπεινοφροσύνη is clearly used in this latter sense in Hermas, *Vis.* 3,10,6 and *Sim.* 5,3,7. This suggests a fair degree of ascetic practice as part of the Colossian “philosophy” (as presumably confirmed by 2,21 and 23; cf. 1 Tim 4,3)⁽⁶⁰⁾.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ The translation “insisting on self-abasement” (*RSV/NRSV*) is therefore misleading. DIBELIUS, *An die Kolosser*, 34-35 preferred an old minority view that θέλων should be treated as an adverbial modification of the preceding verb (“let no one wilfully disqualify you”), but his advocacy has not won it any more support.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ LIGHTFOOT, *The Epistles of St Paul*, 193; see also BRUCE, *The Epistles*, 118, n. 115.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Pace SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, 162.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ So e.g. E. PERCY, *Die Probleme der Kolosser- und Epheserbriefe* (Lund 1946) 147-149; W. GRUNDMANN, *TDNT* VIII, 22; SCHWEIZER, “Elemente”, 161-162; LINCOLN, *Paradise*, 111; otherwise H. GIESEN, *EWNT* III (1983) 800-801. LOHSE, *Die Briefe*, 174 takes ταπεινοφροσύνη in the sense “Dienstbereitschaft”; DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy*, brushes aside the evidence cited and simply asserts that ταπεινοφροσύνη here is a distinctively Christian virtue (63, 71, 74-75).

"Worship of angels" is more problematic, but a wholly natural rendering would take it as worship given to angels (objective genitive)⁽⁶¹⁾. It is true that there is no close parallel to the phrase, but popular religion in the Greco-Roman world did reckon with ἄγγελοι, "messengers", both from heaven and from the underworld⁽⁶²⁾. And there is some evidence for the worship of angels in western Asia Minor, first adduced by W. Ramsay⁽⁶³⁾, though it may equally suggest pagan borrowing of only half understood Jewish concepts⁽⁶⁴⁾. A plausible picture can thus emerge, which envisages the Colossian "philosophy" as a syncretistic religious mix involving ascetic practices and worship of angels. Linked with the talk of rulers and authority (1,16; 2,15), these angels could be seen within the "philosophy" as either benevolent, and therefore to be worshipped to attain their blessing, or as malevolent, and therefore to be appeased.

How does this fit, however, with the strongly Jewish character which has been evident in the earlier allusions to the Colossian "philosophy"? "Humility" as fasting is certainly Jewish enough. But worship of angels is something one would not expect in any of the forms of Judaism known to us for this period. It is true that various second-century sources describe (or accuse) Jews of

(61) So, most recently, WOLTER, *Der Brief an die Kolosser*, 146-147: "sind die Engel hier ohne Zweifel als Gegenstand der Verehrung im Blick"; DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy*, 59-62.

(62) W. GRUNDMANN, *TDNT* I, 75.

(63) BAGD, θρησκεία; A. R. R. SHEPPARD, "Pagan Cults of Angels in Roman Asia Minor", *Talanta* XII-XIII (1980-81) 77-101; TREBILCO, *Jewish Communities*, 132-133; DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy*, 62.

(64) G. H. R. HORSLEY, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*. Vol 5: Linguistic Essays (North Ryde, Australia 1989) 72-73, 136; SHEPPARD, "Pagan Cults", 86-87; TREBILCO, *Jewish Communities*, 137; S. MITCHELL, *Anatolia: Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor* (2 vols; Oxford 1993) II, 45-46. On whether the recently published inscription from north-east of Ankara (late second or third century CE), where the dedication is "to the great God Most High (θεῷ Ὑψίστῳ)" and "his holy angels", indicates Jewish syncretism or pagan borrowing, see SHEPPARD, 94-99; TREBILCO, 137 and MITCHELL, II, 46. LIGHTFOOT, *The Epistles of St Paul*, 65-66 had already observed the interesting coincidence that the Canons of the fourth-century Council of Laodicea warn against Christians "Judaizing", observing the sabbath and other festivals, and going off to "name angels" (ἄγγέλους ὀνομάζειν) in other gatherings (29, 35, 37, 38).

worshipping angels — *Kerygma Petri* (in Clem. Alex., *Strom.* 6,5,41,2), *Apology of Aristides* 14,4 and Celsus, in Origen's *contra Celsum* 1,26 and 5,6 (also Origen himself in *Comm. in Joann.* 13,17); but none of these can be described as a friendly witness⁽⁶⁵⁾. Pseudo-Philo 13,6 also speaks of "an offering for your watchers (= guardian angels?)"; *I Enoch* 48,5 and 62,6.9 envisage worship given to the Son of Man; and later on t. Hullin 2,18 alludes to angel worship within popular Judaism⁽⁶⁶⁾.

More characteristic of Judaism, however, was warning against worship of the host of heaven (Deut 4,19; 17,3; Jer 8,2; 19,13; Zeph 1,5), and repeated warnings in first-century Judaism against the worship of angels (*Apoc. Zeph.* 6,15; *Apoc. Abr.* 17,2; Philo, *Fug.* 212; *Som.* 1,232, 238; similarly Rev 19,10 and 22,9; *Asc. Isa.* 7,21)⁽⁶⁷⁾; in *Adam and Eve* 13-15 angels are commanded by Michael to worship Adam as the image of God; in PsPhilo 34,2 sacrifice to angels is linked with magic and condemned; and when in the early second century Elisha ben Abuyah hailed a second divine power in heaven he was completely disowned as apostate by his fellow rabbis⁽⁶⁸⁾. Were the Colossian "philosophy" Jewish in character, on this hypothesis, we would have to envisage a very syncretistic form of Judaism, unlike anything else we know of. This, however, hardly squares well with the evidence of a Jewish character for the "philosophy" which relished not simply odd bits and pieces abstracted from Judaism but the identity markers which marked out ethnic Jews anxious to maintain their ancestral traditions (circumcision, food laws, sabbath in particular)⁽⁶⁹⁾.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ But M. SIMON, *Verus Israel* (Oxford 1986) 345-347, is not alone in seeing in these reports evidence of Jewish syncretism.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ STERN, *Greek and Latin Authors*, II,295; S. LYONNET, "Paul's Adversaries in Colossae", FRANCIS - MEEKS (eds.), *Conflict*, 147-161: 151-153, is willing to speak of veneration of the names of the angels at Qumran.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ See also A. L. WILLIAMS, "The Cult of the Angels at Colossae", *JTS* 10 (1909) 413-438, particularly 420-432; PERCY, *Die Probleme*, 149-155; L. W. HURTADO, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (Philadelphia 1988) 82-85.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ For details see e.g. C. ROWLAND, *The Open Heaven* (London 1982) 331-339.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Particularly unsatisfactory is DEMARIS's, *The Colossian Controversy*, hypothesis of a kind of Jewish Middle Platonism which advocated demon worship (particularly 104-108), whose points of contact with the text

It is here, however, that the alternative offered by Francis comes into play. This starts from the neglected observation that θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων can also be taken as a subjective genitive (as in 4 Macc 5,7 and Jos., *Ant.* 12,253), denoting worship offered *by* angels, that is, to God. Such worship is implicit already in the great visions of Isa 6,2-3, Dan 7,10 and *1 Enoch* 14,18-23, and explicit in *1 Enoch* 36,4; 39-40; 61,10-12, *2 Enoch* 20-21, *Apoc. Abr.* 17-18, *Test. Levi* 3,3-8, not to mention the Christian evidence of Luke 2,14, Phil 2,10-11, Rev 4-5, and *Asc. Isa.* 7-9⁽⁷⁰⁾. But more to the point here is the evidence of a desire particularly within apocalyptic and mystical circles of first-century Judaism to join in with the worship of angels in heaven. It is implicit already in such Psalms as 29,1-2 and 148,1-2. But it is most strikingly attested in *Test. Job* 48-50, where the three daughters of Job speak in the language of angels, praising and worshipping God. Similarly in *Apoc. Abr.* 17 Abraham is taught a hymn of praise by the angel who joins with him in reciting it. The same motif is a feature of *Asc. Isa.* 7,13-9,33 (particularly 8,17 and 9,28.33). And in *Apoc. Zeph.* 8,3-4 the seer sees the angels praying, and prays with them, knowing their language⁽⁷¹⁾.

Most interesting of all is the evidence that such worship was coveted at Qumran⁽⁷²⁾. According to 1QSa 2,8-9 the rules for the congregation of the last days would have to be strict, "for the Angels of Holiness are [with] their [congregation]". But the implication of other references is that these rules were already in operation, indicating that the Qumran community saw itself as a priestly community whose holiness was defined by the presence of the angels (1QH 3,21-22; 11,10-13; cf. particularly 4Q267 fr. 17, 1.6-9 and 1QM 7,4-6 with Lev 21,17-21). More to the immediate

of Colossians are hardly obvious, at best tangential and seem to result from a tendentious reading of the text.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ H. BIETENHARD, *Die himmlische Welt im Urchristentum und Spätjudentum* (WUNT 2; Tübingen 1951) 123-142; see further M. MACH, *Entwicklungsstadien des jüdischen Engelglaubens in vorrabbinischer Zeit* (Tübingen 1992) 219-228.

⁽⁷¹⁾ See further SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, 90-94; C. R. A. MORRAY-JONES, "Paradise Revisited (2 Cor 12,1-12): The Jewish Mystical Background of Paul's Apostolate", *HTR* 86 (1992) 177-217, 265-292: 182.

⁽⁷²⁾ For the sake of convenience the extracts are all taken from G. VERMES, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (Harmondsworth 31987).

point, in 1QSb 4,25-26 one of the blessings of the priest is: "May you be as an Angel of the Presence in the Abode of Holiness to the glory of the God of [hosts] ... May you attend upon the service in the Temple of the Kingdom and decree destiny in company with the Angels of the Presence". Most interesting of all are the recently published complete (but often fragmentary) texts of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4Q400-405), which contain songs of praise to be offered to God by angels in the heavenly temple during the first thirteen sabbaths of the year, and where it is clear enough (since the Songs presumably belonged to the community's liturgy) that the community itself (or at least its priests) joined with the angels in reciting these songs of heavenly worship⁽⁷³⁾.

It is quite possible, therefore, to envisage a Jewish synagogue in Colossae which was influenced by such ideas and which delighted in their worship sabbath by sabbath as a participation in the worship of the angels in heaven (cf. 1 Cor 11,10). In which case, the "humility" associated with this worship could very well denote the spiritual discipline and mortification (particularly, but not only fasting) regarded as essential to maintain the holiness required to participate with the holy ones and the holy angels⁽⁷⁴⁾. The association of fasting and heavenly revelation is stressed in such passages as Dan 10,2-3; *Apoc. Abr.* 9,7-10; 12,1-2; *Test. Isaac* 4,1-6; 5,4; 4 *Ezra* 5,13; 6,35 and 2 *Bar* 5,7; and Philo notes that Moses' listening to the strains of heavenly worship was consequent upon his fasting for forty days and nights (*Som.* 1,35-37; *Mos.* 2,67-69)⁽⁷⁵⁾.

(73) See C. NEWSOM, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (Atlanta 1985) particularly 59-72; VERMES, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 221.

(74) Note again the close parallel between Col 1,12 and 1QS 11,7-8 and 1QH 11,10-12.

(75) FRANCIS, "Humility", 167-171. See also KEHL, "Erniedrigung", 368-374, 383-388; A. J. BANDSTRA, "Did the Colossian Errorists Need a Mediator?", *New Dimensions in New Testament Study* (ed. R. N. LONGENECKER – M. C. TENNEY) (Grand Rapids 1974) 329-343: 335-338; I. GRUENWALD, *Apocalyptic and Merkabah Mysticism* (Leiden 1980) 99-102; LINCOLN, *Paradise*, 111; SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, 65-66, 150-153. The clear implications of the evidence are determinedly resisted by DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy*, 75-77. Against Bandstra's thesis that the Colossians' error was thinking they could participate in angelic liturgies without the assistance of a mediator, EVANS, "The Colossian Mystics", 199, rightly points out that there is no hint that the need of a mediator was an issue in the writings cited.

But it would be equally possible to take both nouns as referring to the angels — “delighting in the humility and worship of the angels” — as may be implicit in the very fact that such glorious beings also fall down in worship before God⁽⁷⁶⁾.

The case for seeing the reference to “angel-worship” in Col 2,18 as an allusion to a practice of mystical worship in one or more of the Colossian synagogues is therefore a good deal stronger than has usually been acknowledged by the proponents of the alternative, Phrygian syncretism hypothesis. For some reason several have assumed that the further reference to this worship as ἐθελοθρησκία in 2,23 rules out the possibility of taking θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων as a subjective genitive⁽⁷⁷⁾. But an ἐθελο- compound simply denotes an action or status taken voluntarily or deliberately⁽⁷⁸⁾. The implied criticism here then, like the preceding “reputation of wisdom” which governs the phrase, is dressed in an acknowledgment of good intent; the “worship (of angels)” was freely chosen⁽⁷⁹⁾. Alternatively, given its coinage to suit occasion, the word could be a play on the θέλων ἐν ... θρησκείᾳ of 2,18, denoting “delighted-in worship”, or be intended to convey the sense “wished-for worship”, implying that participation in angel worship was a figment of an overimaginative desire⁽⁸⁰⁾. And if the next phrase, ἀπειδίᾳ σώματος, is in apposition, there could be a still stronger negative note — the severity to the body as an expression of the strength of the desire.

(⁷⁶) Str-B III, 629 referring to Aboth Rabbi Nathan 12; see also ROWLAND “Apocalyptic Visions”, 75; SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, 160 and SUMNEY, “Those Who ‘Pass Judgment’”, 376-377.

(⁷⁷) LOHSE, *Die Briefe*, 175, n.2; MARTIN, *Colossians*, 94; SCHWEIZER, *Der Brief an die Kolosser*, 122-123; W. RADL, *EWNT* 2 (1981) 383-384 and DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy*, 77-79. And (pace M. BOCKMUEHL, *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity* [WUNT 2,36; Tübingen 1990] 180), it is not so much interest in angelic worship which Paul finds “reprehensible” as the attitude of dismissive superiority which it evidently engendered among its practitioners (μηδεις ὑμᾶς καταβραβεύετω ...).

(⁷⁸) See LSJ, ἐθελο-.

(⁷⁹) See also FRANCIS, “Humility”, 181-182; KEHL, “Erniedrigung”, 390; CARR, “Notes”, 500; H. BALZ, *EWNT* 1 (1980) 923; ROWLAND, “Apocalyptic Visions”, 76-77; O'BRIEN, *Colossians*, 153.

(⁸⁰) *NEB/REB*'s “forced piety” introduces an unjustifiably strong negative note, as does Wolter's “selbstgemachte Verehrung” (WOLTER, *Der Brief an die Kolosser*, 153-154).

The other feature earlier regarded as strong evidence for Colossian syncretism, the use of the term ἐμβατεύων, can now be almost wholly discounted. Despite Dibelius⁽⁸¹⁾, it is dubious whether ἐμβατεύω was strictly speaking a technical term, at least for entry into a mystery cult. Its basic meaning is simply “enter”, being regularly used in legal papyri of entering into possession of an inheritance⁽⁸²⁾. So in the two OT (LXX) occurrences (Josh 19,49.51), where the thought is of entering into the possession of the promised land. So too in the Klaros inscriptions, on which Dibelius based his hypothesis, the basic thought seems to be of entering into the sanctuary to consult the oracle⁽⁸³⁾. And the Fathers seem unaware that the term could have such sensitive overtones⁽⁸⁴⁾. Moreover, when we set the usage here against the background already sketched out above, we cannot but be aware that the revelations described usually involved a visionary or mystical ascent to (entry into) or through the heavens (e.g. *1 Enoch* 14,8-13; *2 Enoch* 3; *3 Bar* 2,2; 3,1-2; *Test. Levi* 2,5-7; *Rev* 4,1-2). It was when Elisha ben Abuyah “entered a garden” (= paradise = heaven) that he committed the heresy of recognizing a second divine power in heaven⁽⁸⁵⁾. Indeed, ἐμβατεύειν itself is attested in the sense of

(81) M. DIBELIUS, “The Isis Initiation in Apuleius and Related Initiatory Rites”, FRANCIS – MEEKS (eds.), *Conflict*, 61-121: the Colossian mystery cult, “the earliest certainly datable and historically recognizable case of an early and germinal Christian-gnostic formation” (91): briefly DIBELIUS, *An die Kolosser*, 35-36. The link was first posited by W. Ramsay early in 1912, who gives his own account of the matter in his *The Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present Day* (London 1913) 286-305.

(82) F.O. FRANCIS, “The Background of EMBATEUEIN (Col. 2,18) in Legal Papyri and Oracle Inscriptions”, FRANCIS – MEEKS (eds.), *Conflict*, 197-207: 198-199. Less likely is the suggestion that the verb means “investigate closely” (H. PREISKER, *TDNT* II, 535-536; S. LYONNET, “L’Épître aux Colossiens [Col 2,18] et les mystères d’Apollon Clarien”, *Bib* 43 [1962] 417-435: 432-433; and strongly advocated by DEMARIS, *The Colossian Controversy*, 64-66, also 114-118), since the thought in the two parallels cited (2 Macc 2,30 and Philo, *Plant.* 80) is primarily that of “enter (deeply) into (a subject)”.

(83) FRANCIS, “Background”, 199-204.

(84) *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ἐμβατεύω.

(85) ROWLAND, *Open Heaven*, ch. 12. See further A.F. SEGAL, “Heavenly Ascent in Hellenistic Judaism, Early Christianity and their Environment”, *ANRW* II, 23,2 (1980) 1333-1394; SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, 73-75.

“entering heaven”⁽⁸⁶⁾. Most interesting of all is the clear indication in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice that heaven was seen as a temple where the angelic worship took place, and the prominence given to doorways of the temple (probably on the basis of Ezek 40–41)⁽⁸⁷⁾ and to the theme of entering (4Q405 14-15i,3-4 and 4Q405 23i,8-10).

When we add the echo of Josh 19,49.51 in Col 1,12, the inference becomes strong that there was a prominent strand among the Colossian Jews who thought of heaven either (or both) as a promised land into which they should aspire even now to enter, or particularly as the temple of God into which they could now enter by means of appropriate spiritual disciplines in order to share the worship of the angels in heaven. It was their delight thus to “enter” sabbath by sabbath (note the present tense). This would also make best sense of the other part of the phrase (ἃ ἐόρακεν), which Dibelius treated too lightly. For it is precisely the characteristic of the apocalyptic and mystical Jewish traditions documented above to give prominence to “the things seen” (e.g. *1 Enoch* 14; *Test. Abr.* 10; Rev 4–5); we should recall again that Paul himself enjoyed such a visionary or mystical journey (2 Cor 12,2-4). This no doubt was why the Colossian Jews so “delighted in” these practices, so rich were the aural-visual experiences which they had enjoyed at least once in the past (the force of the perfect tense is not wholly clear)⁽⁸⁸⁾. And if they were persuasive word-spinners on the subject (2,4.8) it is no wonder that Paul and Timothy were concerned that

⁽⁸⁶⁾ FRANCIS, “Background”, 197; EVANS, “The Colossian Mystics”, 198, n. 45; see also CARR, “Notes”, 498-499; LINCOLN, *Paradise*, 112-113; SAPPINGTON, *Revelation and Redemption*, 155-158.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ See NEWSOM, *Songs*, 39-59.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ The weakest point of this thesis is how to correlate it with the implication that the Colossian philosophy included belief in heavenly powers which were threatening or hostile (the implication of 2,8.10.15 and 20). This might provide the best evidence that the beliefs and practices of the Colossian synagogue(s) were syncretistic in some measure. But the issue may equally be resolved by the observation of MORRAY-JONES, “Paradise Revisited”, 182-183, that heavenly ascents could be frightening and dangerous; he speaks of “a genre of horror stories” in Jewish mystical tradition which warn against ill-advised attempts to hazard such an ascent: “...terrifyingly dangerous and forbidden”. We may note in particular the famous warning tale of the four sages (190-208); and the line of reflection gives added significance to Paul’s reference to the ἄγγελος σατανᾶ (2 Cor 12,7) in his own recollection of such experiences (281-283).

they might well captivate the Colossian believers by the descriptions they gave and be fearful lest Epaphras' converts feel that they were indeed in danger of being disqualified and deprived of the prize of their new faith.

VII

The main proponents of the Colossian "philosophy", therefore, almost certainly have to be understood as belonging to one of the Colossian synagogues. If indeed there were Jews in Colossae confident in their religion (2,18) through faithfulness to what were traditional (Jewish) observances (2,16.21-23), we should not be surprised if they professed such claims in dialogue and debate with other Colossians. And if there then grew up in their midst a new version of their own teaching, proclaiming the Jewish Messiah and the fulfilment of ancient Jewish hopes (1,12 and 3,12), but intended for Gentiles, despite "the uncircumcision of the flesh" and their ignorance of Jewish law and tradition, then, again, it would hardly be a surprise if some of the more outspoken and religiously confident members of the synagogues spoke dismissively of the beliefs, devotion and praxis of the new movement as compared with their own.

This hypothesis also fits with the striking lack of urgency in the Colossian letter's response to the challenge to the Christian congregation(s) at Colossae. Here we should underline the danger of assuming that the only challenge from a Jewish perspective to a church in Asia Minor had to be of the sort we encounter in Galatians. For it is clear that, in contrast to Galatians, such polemic as there is in Colossians is remarkably light; the letter is more than one-third written before the fact of a challenge to the Colossian believers comes to light. Nor is there any real evidence in Colossians of a vigorous Jewish or Christian-Jewish proselytizing (i.e. circumcising) mission⁽⁸⁹⁾. In contrast, however, we have now seen that the implication of 2,4 and 8; 2,16 and 18 is rather of a challenge from a confident and dismissive apologetic from those for whom the religio-ethnic distinction between "the circumcision" and "the

⁽⁸⁹⁾ Cf. particularly M.D. HOOKER, "Were there False Teachers in Colossae?", *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament* (FS. C.F.D. Moule; [ed. B. LINDARS – S.S. SMALLEY] Cambridge 1973) 315-331, reprinted in *From Adam to Christ: Essays on Paul* (Cambridge 1990) 121-136.

uncircumcision" was still axiomatic. In other words, the cumulative evidence seems to point more and more to a Jewish denigration of the Colossian Christians' claim to participate in Israel's heritage, by a reaffirmation not least of the significance of the continued circumcision/uncircumcision division. In short, the challenge to the Colossian Christians was not from an evangelistic Judaism (or Jewish Christianity), but more probably from a confident Jewish apologetic.

One other corollary should also be mentioned. The standard way of speaking of the Colossian philosophy is to refer to it as "the Colossian heresy", or by reference to "the Colossian errorists". Quite apart from whether "heresy" is an appropriate term at this stage in Christian development⁽⁹⁰⁾, it should now be observed that the terms "heretics" or "errorists" may totally misrepresent those alluded to, and may indeed amount to little more than cheap and unworthy name-calling. For titles like "heretic" or "errorist" reduce the system represented by those so labelled to the status of no more than a corrupt growth on Christianity as the main plant, their whole system of religion summed up and sweepingly dismissed solely as "error". This may be effective populist demagogery, but it is hardly a responsible historical judgment. And if, as I have argued, the Colossian philosophy is a form of diaspora Judaism, then it was certainly more venerable, more established and more esteemed than the Colossian Christians. We do no justice to Christianity if we demean its early rivals by using such language, and incapacitate our texts from serving as role models for a Christianity keen to respond to its contemporary challenges.

In short, given the various factors outlined above, including the likely origin of the Colossian church from within synagogue circles, the possibility of Israelite sectarianism in the diaspora, the lack of other evidence of Jewish syncretism in Asia Minor, and the readiness of some Jews to promote their distinctive religious practices in self-confident apology, we need look no further than one or more of the Jewish synagogues in Colossae for the source of whatever influences were thought to threaten the young church there. The more relaxed style of Colossians' polemic, and the

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Cf. particularly W. Bauer's principal thesis in *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum* (Tübingen 1934); and J.D.G. DUNN, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (London ²1990).

absence of anything quite like the fierceness of the reaction in Galatians, further suggests that what was being confronted was not a sustained attempt to undermine or further convert the Colossians, but a synagogue apologetic promoting itself as a credible philosophy more than capable of dealing with whatever heavenly powers might be thought to control or threaten human existence. To describe this as a "heresy" is quite inappropriate, and to brand it simply as "false teaching" (maintained by Colossian "errosists"!) reduces that teaching to its controverted features and completely fails to appreciate the strength and attractiveness of a confident Jewish apologia.

University of Durham
Department of Theology
Abbey House, Palace Green
Durham DH1 3RS, England

James D. G. DUNN

SOMMAIRE

Le but de cet article est de montrer que la lettre aux Colossiens répond aux objections d'un Judaïsme mystique et non syncrétiste, sûr de son héritage et peu impressionné par la petite communauté chrétienne qui se réunissait chez Philémon. Il n'y a qu'une façon de comprendre cette lettre: elle suppose qu'à Colosses, et à la différence de la Galatie, la menace vient de la synagogue et de la «circoncision» qui refusait à l'«incirconcision» toute participation à l'héritage d'Israël. Cette opposition au christianisme mérite le titre de philosophie «concurrente» plutôt que d'«hérésie» ou d'«erreur».

**“You Did Not Lie to Us (Human Beings) but to God”
(Acts 5,4c)⁽¹⁾**

This article contends that “You did not lie to us but to God” (Acts 5,4c)⁽²⁾, rephrased and intensified in v.9a as “How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test”, best states Luke’s message in the Ananias and Sapphira story (Acts 5,1-11); for Luke wants to show that, like Jesus at his temptation, the early church cannot be compromised or deceived by Satan because ultimately one is not lying *only* to human beings but to God and the Holy Spirit, who are present in the community and working through the apostles, especially Peter. This contention finds support in the importance given to Peter and to the feet of the apostles in the story of Ananias and Sapphira and to the Christian community in the early chapters of Acts. Moreover, the emphasis given to the freedom of Ananias and Sapphira and the Lucan parallels to this pericope further substantiate the above contention.

The methodology employed is a kind of redaction criticism, which might more properly be called composition criticism. Luke composed the whole of Luke-Acts, and so it is not unreasonable to investigate his meaning in any given pericope. This type of criticism seems particularly beneficial in the Acts of the Apostles where it is often close to impossible to detect with any reasonable accuracy Luke’s sources⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ This article will follow the translation of *The Holy Bible. New Revised Standard Version: Catholic Edition* (Washington, DC 1991), unless for some reason that translation be judged incorrect; then the translation is my own.

⁽²⁾ Other authors have also pointed to the importance of these words but have not expanded much on their observations. See, for example, F. F. BRUCE, *Commentary on the Book of the Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI 1987; original, 1954) 112; E. HAENCHEN, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia 1971) 241; L. T. JOHNSON, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Sacra Pagina 5; Collegeville, MN 1992) 88.

⁽³⁾ For instance, G. LÜDEMANN, *Das frühe Christentum nach den Traditionen der Apostelgeschichte* (Göttingen 1987) 71, grants that the parallel in 1 Cor 5,1-6.13 suggests that there might be a historical kernel for

This article first points out that some questions distract from Luke's real purpose in Acts 5,1-11. Then it considers the literary form of the pericope, thoroughly analyzes its diptych structure, contents, and the encounter between the divine and the anti-divine and determines how the pericope fits into its present context. Lastly, the most likely parallels to the Ananias and Sapphira story are discussed.

I. Some Questions Distract from Luke's Purpose

Some questions asked about the Ananias and Sapphira narrative distract from Luke's purpose. For instance, how many persons are present at this event; is not the community now so large (cf. 2,41; 4,4) that any possibility of Peter being able to address such a large gathering stretches the imagination? Why does Peter not follow Jesus' directive about forgiveness in Luke 17,3-4, and why is neither Ananias nor Sapphira offered an opportunity of repentance? Or how is it possible that Ananias could have been so heartlessly buried without his wife's knowledge, and are we to imagine that the whole group just sat there for three hours and waited for Sapphira to show up? Why is the punishment not more in proportion to the crime? Do their deaths indicate eternal damnation? These and similar questions which do not originate with the text but rather from theoretical questions about the text can distract the reader from perceiving Luke's purpose in the story.

II. The Literary Form of Acts 5,1-11

G. Theissen sees the Ananias and Sapphira story as the only example of a rule miracle of punishment in the NT, although the story of the withered fig tree (Mark 11,12-14.20-21) may be treated as one. This literary form of Acts 5,1-11 reveals the tremendous seriousness which ancients, including Christians, felt about the observance of the divine will; in the presence of God the issue is one

the story in Acts 5,1-11. Yet 1 Cor 5,1-6.13 do not offer an exact parallel, for Ananias and his wife are not handed over to Satan for the destruction of their flesh so that their spirits might be saved on the day of the Lord.

of life and death⁽⁴⁾. The proximity of the rule miracle of punishment to the divine ruling is unmistakable⁽⁵⁾. Theissen proposes a compositional structure of the motifs found in miracle stories, and a few authors employ it in their commentaries on the Ananias and Sapphira story⁽⁶⁾. Granted the uniqueness of the miracles in Acts 5,1-11 and aware that in the consideration of Luke's diptych structure of the pericope many of these points will be treated in detail, let us briefly try to select from Theissen's motifs those which seem applicable:

Introduction (Introductory Motifs):

Reasons given for the appearance of "opposite number": Sale of a piece of property of which only some of the proceeds are laid at the apostles' feet (vv. 1-2); after an interval of about three hours Sapphira came in, not knowing what had happened (v. 7).

Exposition (Motifs):

Argument: Peter asks Ananias why Satan has filled his heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back from the proceeds of the land. After all, Ananias was under no obligation to sell his property or

(⁴) G. THEISSEN, *The Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition* (ed. J. RICHES) (Philadelphia 1983) 109-110. See also H.D. BETZ, *Lukian von Samosata und das Neue Testament* (TU 76; Berlin 1961) 178. M. DIBELIUS, *Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte* (Hrsg. H. GREEVEN) (FRLANT NF 42; Göttingen 1961) 21, sees Acts 5,1-11 as a legend, but speaks of the pericope much as a rule miracle of punishment. G. STÄHLIN, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (NTD 5; Göttingen 1970) 85, also speaks of a legend because of the importance given to Peter. Surprisingly, THEISSEN, *Miracle Stories*, 109, does not view Acts 13,8-12 as a rule miracle of punishment, but A. WEISER *Die Apostelgeschichte: Kapitel 1-12* (Hrsg. E. GRÄSSER - K. KERTELEGE) (ÖTK 5; Gütersloh-Würzburg 1981) 140, holds that both it and Acts 8,18-24 belong to that literary form.

(⁵) See G. SCHNEIDER, *Die Apostelgeschichte I* (HTKNT 5; Freiburg 1980) 371, n. 14 and WEISER, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 147. H. CONZELMANN, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (HNT 7; Tübingen 1972) 45, correctly indicates that, in contrast to Acts 13,11, Peter utters no explicit declaration of punishment. Conzelmann refers his reader to 1 Kgs 14 and Jerome, *Epist.* 130,14,5-6. In fact, if the literary form of a rule miracle of punishment demands an explicit declaration of punishment, it would be more accurate to designate Acts 5,1-11 as a divine ruling.

(⁶) THEISSEN, *Miracle Stories*, 72-74. Confer R. PESCH, *Die Apostelgeschichte (Apg 1-12)* (EKKNT 5/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1986) 195-196. WEISER, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 139-140, has somewhat modified Theissen's structure.

to contribute anything to the community (vv.3-4ab). Peter asks Sapphira about the price of the field and she lies. Peter then establishes that she, too, was free (vv.8-9a).

Middle (Central Motifs):

Miracle working words (truer of v.9 than of v.4c): "You did not lie to us but to God" (v.4c). "Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out" (v.9).

Recognition of the miracle: "Now when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and died" (v.5a). "Immediately, she fell down at his feet and died" (v.10a).

Conclusion (Final Motifs):

Demonstration (usually, a miracle is not simply recognized but also demonstrated by a new act): The young men come in and carry both of them out and bury them (vv.6.10).

Wonder (fear): "And great fear seized all ..." (v.5b). "And great fear seized ..." (v.11a).

The spread of the news: "...all who heard of it" (v.5b). "...the whole church and all who heard of these things" (v.11).

If Theissen's identification of the literary form be correct, the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira are the miracles; but we will see that Luke's emphasis is not on the deaths nor on their being carried out and buried nor on the resultant fear. Rather these rule miracles of punishment primarily demonstrate that God and the Holy Spirit are working through the apostles, especially Peter, in the community.

III. The Diptych Structure of Acts 5,1-11

Although the literary form of the Ananias and Sapphira story is a rule miracle of punishment, Luke in his final composition presents Acts 5,1-11 as a diptych⁽⁷⁾, the first panel of which, vv.1-6, matches the second panel, vv.7-11. Let us first point out this diptych,

⁽⁷⁾ Elsewhere, I have shown that Luke uses a diptych structure in Jesus' healing of a crippled woman, "Some Exegetical Reflections on Luke 13,10-17", *Bib* 73 (1992) 85-89, in the Zacchaeus Story, "The Literary Form of Luke 19:1-10", *JBL* 110 (1991) 112-116 and in Acts 26, *Acts* 26. *The Christological Climax of Paul's Defense (Ac 22:1-26:32)* (AnBib 78; Rome 1978) 28-32.

comment on it in general and then draw a comparison between the two panels to see how Luke composed his story and what he wants to say to his reader. The two panels of the diptych have the following nine major similarities which contain lesser ones; the Greek text is provided so that all these similarities can be more easily seen:

1. The main character of each panel is introduced: "But a man named Ananias" (v. 1a: Ἀνὴρ δέ τις Ἀνανίας ὀνόματι). "After an interval of about three hours his wife came in" (v. 7a: Ἐγένετο δὲ ὥς ὥρων τριῶν διάστημα καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ ... εἰσῆλθεν).

2. "With...his wife, Sapphira, he sold a piece of property...but kept part of the proceeds" (vv. 1b-2a: σὺν Σαπφίρῃ τῇ γυναικὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπώλησεν κτῆμα καὶ ἐνοσφίσατο ἀπὸ τῆς τιμῆς). "'Tell me whether you and your husband sold the land for such and such a price'. And she said, 'Yes that was the price'" (v. 8: ἀπεκρίθη δὲ πρὸς αὐτὴν Πέτρος, εἰπέ μοι, εἰ τοσούτου τὸ χωρίον ἀπέδοσθε; ἡ δὲ εἶπεν, Ναί, τοσούτου).

2a. "and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land" (v. 3b: καὶ νοσφίσασθαι ἀπὸ τῆς τιμῆς τοῦ χωρίου).

2b. "While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own and after it was sold, were not the proceeds at your disposal" (v. 4a: οὐχὶ μένον σοὶ ἔμενεν καὶ πραθὲν ἐν τῇ σῇ ἐξουσίᾳ ὑπῆρχεν;).

3. Reference is made to Sapphira's knowledge or lack thereof: "'With his wife's knowledge'" (v. 2b: συνειδυίης καὶ τῆς γυναικός). "Not knowing what had happened" (v. 7b: μὴ εἰδυῖα τὸ γεγονὸς).

4. An action takes place at the feet of the apostles or of Peter: "And brought only a part [of the proceeds] and laid it at the apostles' feet" (v. 2cd: καὶ ἐνέγκας μέρος τι παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τῶν ἀποστόλων ἔθηκεν). "Immediately she fell down at his feet" (v. 10a: ἔπεσεν δὲ παραχρῆμα πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ).

5. Peter reacts to their lie about the price paid for their piece of property: "Peter asked" (v. 3a: εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Πέτρος). "Then Peter said to her" (v. 9a: ὁ δὲ Πέτρος πρὸς αὐτήν).

6. The action of Ananias and Sapphira really amounts to lying to the Holy Spirit or to God: "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit...? How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You did not lie to us but to God" (vv. 3a.4bc: Ἀνανία, διὰ τί ἐπλήρωσεν ὁ Σατανᾶς τὴν καρδίαν σου ψεύσασθαί σε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον...; τί ὅτι ἔθου ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου τὸ πρᾶγμα τοῦτο⁽⁸⁾; οὐκ ἐψεύσω ἀνθρώποις ἀλλὰ τῷ θεῷ). "How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test?" (v. 9a: Τί ὅτι συνεφωνήθη ὑμῖν πειράσαι τὸ πνεῦμα κυρίου;).

(⁸) One is reminded of Luke 12,34: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also".

7. After being confronted by Peter, each falls dead: “Now when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and died” (v. 5a: ἀκούων δὲ ὁ Ἀνανίας τοὺς λόγους τούτους πεσὼν ἐξέψυξεν). “And [she] died” (v. 10a: καὶ ἐξέψυξεν).

8. “And great fear seized all who heard of it” (v. 5b: καὶ ἐγένετο φόβος μέγας ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς ἀκούοντας). “And great fear seized the whole church and all who heard of these things” (v. 11: καὶ ἐγένετο φόβος μέγας ἐφ’ ὅλην τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς ἀκούοντας ταῦτα).

9. “The young men came and wrapped up his body, then carried him out and buried him” (v. 6: ἀναστάντες δὲ οἱ νεώτεροι συνέστειλαν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐξενέγκαντες ἔθαψαν). “Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out... When the young men came in they found her dead, so they carried her out and buried her beside her husband (vv. 9b.10bc: ἰδοὺ οἱ πόδες τῶν θαψάντων τὸν ἄνδρα σου ἐπὶ τῇ θύρᾳ καὶ ἐξοίσουσίν σε... εἰσελθόντες δὲ οἱ νεανίσκοι εὗρον αὐτὴν νεκράν, καὶ ἐξενέγκαντες ἔθαψαν πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς).

1. *General Observations about the Diptych*

The diptych (Acts 5,1-6.7-11) allows Luke to repeat and underline certain aspects of his story. In one sense, Luke has reported the scene in each panel quite briefly: his composition could even be called “lean”. He introduces Ananias and Sapphira respectively and moves on to Peter’s questions which establish Ananias’ and Sapphira’s freedom and clarify the guilt of each. There follow Peter’s important prophetic words about their fate, after which both Ananias and Sapphira fall dead and each is carried out and buried, and those who hear about the event are fearful (in awe?). Each panel is brief and to the point.

In each panel Peter plays the central role and is the main human agent of the divine. Peter dominates almost half of the first panel; and if one regards “and brought only a part and laid it at the apostles’ feet” (v. 2b) as introducing him, more than half. Almost half of the second panel is again dedicated to him, but there Luke describes him in a more forceful manner. Peter asks questions; there are three in the first panel, and two in the second. These questions bring out the cause of the moral evil and identify its nature; they also clarify the freedom of both Ananias and Sapphira. In each panel, Peter builds up to a solemn prophetic summary description of what Ananias and Sapphira have done: “You did not lie to us (human beings) but to God (Acts 5,4c)” and “How is it that you

have agreed to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test" (v. 9a). What comes before Peter's questions and prophetic statements is introduction, and what comes after them flows from what Peter had to say.

2. *The First Panel (Acts 5,1-5)*

As the first scene opens, Ananias enters. His wife's name is given for the first and only time. As anticipated, Ananias and his wife imitate Barnabas and other Christians and lay the price of the field at the apostles' feet (cf. Acts 4,34-37), but they keep back some of the money. They do not actualize being "of one heart and soul⁽⁹⁾" nor the statement that nothing the Christians possessed was their own and everything was held in common (4,32). The contrast centers on the different attitudes toward possessions. Sapphira knows of the deception, but she is not present in the first scene; and it is not clear what further part, if any, she might play in the story.

Let us consider how Peter acts in the first panel. Luke's reader has no insight into what Peter, the leader of the Christians up to this point in Acts, will do. Peter saw to a successor for Judas, preached at Pentecost and explained the healing of the lame man. He was also the chief spokesperson when John and he were persecuted in Acts 4. Now he acts like Jesus the prophet who knows what others are thinking⁽¹⁰⁾, confronts them⁽¹¹⁾ and whose prophecies are actualized⁽¹²⁾. Peter has not been fooled by Ananias and Sapphira's deception. His immediate identification of what they have done introduces the tension between the anti-divine (Satan, Ananias and Sapphira) and the divine (Holy Spirit, God, Spirit of the Lord, apostles, Peter and the Christian community).

(9) PESCH, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 198.

(10) E.g., Luke 5,20-23; 6,7-8; 7,39-42.47; 9,46-48; 11,17; 22,22; 24,38; cf. Acts 5,3.4b.9a.

(11) E.g., Luke 4,23-27; 7,44bc-46; 13,34-35a; 22,21-22; cf. Acts 5,4c.8-9a.

(12) E.g., Luke 4,1-30; 7,21; 9,22.43b-44; 13,33.35b; 17,25; 18,31-34; 19,38.42-44; 22,21-22.64.69; 24,6-8.44-46; Acts 1,16-20; 2,33-34; 3,18; 7,55-56; 13,27-29; cf. 5,9b-10. On this topic see B. C. FREIN, "Narrative Predictions, OT Prophecies and Luke's Sense of Fulfilment", *NTS* 40 (1994) 23-37.

How do Peter's questions in the first panel relate to his solemn proclamation? They build up to his proclamation, for his first question reveals that Satan filled Ananias' heart and so he lied to the Holy Spirit by keeping back part of the proceeds for the field. Peter's second question establishes Ananias' (and Sapphira's) freedom by pointing out that they did not have to sell the land and when they did sell it they did not have to hand the proceeds over to the apostles⁽¹³⁾. The third question, "How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart?" (v. 4c), establishes that Ananias collaborated with Satan (v. 3) in contriving this evil deed and again insists on his freedom and responsibility which are likewise underlined by his being twice the subject both of νοσφίζεσθαι (vv. 2.3) and of ψεύδεσθαι (vv. 3.4). There then follows Peter's prophetic statement which likewise functions as a summary, "You did not lie to us but to God". This statement of Peter really explains and describes the whole situation. Up to that point, the questions verify certain aspects of the story; but the whole picture appears only in Peter's summary statement. The questions lead up to this summary prophetic statement which forms a kind of climax, and it is Luke's principal message to his reader. Its significance is further supported by Ananias' death which follows on it.

The story does not tell us whether one could contribute only a part of the proceeds received for a field or not, but Peter definitely proclaims that in keeping back some of the money and lying about it, Ananias (and his wife) has not just lied to human beings but to the Holy Spirit⁽¹⁴⁾ and God. Luke puts "this deed" and "to God" (cf. v. 4) last in their respective clauses to underline the gravity of the offense. Since v. 4 is very likely due to Lucan redaction⁽¹⁵⁾, it deserves special attention in determining Luke's purpose in the story. In fact, some authors have not sufficiently reflected on the

⁽¹³⁾ See H. J. KLAUCK, "Gütergemeinschaft in der klassischen Antike, in Qumran und im Neuen Testament", *RevQ* 11 (1982) 71.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Luke 12,10, "And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven", is not relevant here because the story of Ananias and Sapphira is not dealing with acknowledging Jesus nor blaspheming the Spirit, but with moral misconduct within the Christian community.

⁽¹⁵⁾ A number of scholars see Lucan redaction in this verse, e.g., CONZELMANN, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 45; LÜDEMANN, *Das frühe Christentum*, 69-70; SCHNEIDER, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 375.

meaning of Peter's solemn prophetic declaration, "You did not lie to us (human beings), but to God" (v. 4c). First of all, Ananias and Sapphira obviously did lie to the apostles. So, the phrase cannot be taken literally, but should rather be understood as expressing, "You did not lie *only* to us (human beings), but to God". Moreover, Luke has connected this lie to God with a particular event in the story, "brought only a part (of the proceeds) and laid it at the apostles' feet" (v. 2b). "At the apostles' feet" does not look to the whole community but to certain individuals, i.e., the apostles within the community; nor do the feet of the apostles serve only as some central distribution point for sharing one's goods with the poor but are viewed as a place and moment of encounter with God. In other words, in this story Luke portrays a radical connection between the apostles, especially Peter, and God (Holy Spirit and Spirit of the Lord; cf. vv. 3.9). The activity of God and of the Holy Spirit in and through the apostles makes them true representatives of the divine and authority figures⁽¹⁶⁾. God and the Holy Spirit are present in the community and in her leaders (Acts 15,28; cf. vv. 22.26; 20,28), and to lie to Peter is to lie to the Holy Spirit and to God⁽¹⁷⁾. Moreover, this divine presence is more than just a passing phenomenon since "the feet of the apostles" have already twice played a significant role in the life of the community, in the summary, Acts 4,32-35, in v. 35 and in the example of Barnabas (v. 37).

What happens after Peter finishes speaking comes as quite a surprise. To be sure, we had reason to expect that Ananias would be punished or called to repentance, but his death appears almost excessive. Nonetheless, when an author wants to make a point, the unexpected provides a very valid means⁽¹⁸⁾. An easy and effective

⁽¹⁶⁾ For a reflection on the expression, "at the feet of", and on the resultant authority of the apostles, see L. T. JOHNSON, *The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts* (SBLDS 39; Missoula, MT 1977) 201-211.

⁽¹⁷⁾ S. BROWN, *Apostasy and Perseverance in the Theology of Luke* (AnBib 36; Rome 1969) 126-129; JOHNSON, *The Literary Function*, 208-211; SCHNEIDER, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, I, 372; WEISER, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 145. In my *The Unity of Luke's Theology: An Analysis of Luke-Acts* (GNS 9; Wilmington, DE 1984) 43-46, I have shown that the risen Jesus can act through and in his "witnesses".

⁽¹⁸⁾ I am reminded of what Flannery O'Connor had to say about a similar point. See *Three by Flannery O'Connor* (A Signet Classic; New York 1983) xxi:

way to show the evilness of an action is to magnify its results and so reveal the heinousness of the sin. There results a kind of “shock therapy”, and Ananias’ death brings great fear upon all who hear of the event. “All who heard of it” (v. 5b) actually reminds us of the real audience of the narrative⁽¹⁹⁾. Luke is primarily interested in his reader and in his or her vision of the Christian community. V. 5 begins and ends with “hearing”. Ananias hears and dies; all others who hear of the event fear. Whoever acts against the community and her leaders opposes the Holy Spirit and God and will not succeed.

When he entered the scene, Ananias walked in on his own, confident that he and his wife could deceive the apostles and the community. However, his lack of integrity is detected at once. Throughout the whole scene Ananias is totally passive and says nothing; at its end, he falls, dies and has to be wrapped up, carried out and buried. “Dies” is the last word in its clause in v. 5, and “buried him” ends Ananias’ scene.

3. *A Comparison of the First Panel of the Diptych with the Second Panel*

The second panel of the diptych in many ways repeats the first and so literarily functions as repetition⁽²⁰⁾, but it also develops the thought of the first panel in a number of ways. As the scene opens, we are to suppose that Peter, the apostles and whoever was with them just sat around for three hours awaiting the arrival of Sapphira. Apparently, they had nothing better to do. However, this information serves notice that the story is being told for other than historical purposes. Moreover, as I have shown elsewhere, Luke likes to relate similar stories about a man and then about a

When you can assume that your audience holds the same beliefs you do, you can relax and use more normal means of talking to it; when you have to assume that it does not, then you have to make your vision apparent by shock—to the hard of hearing you shout, and for the almost blind you draw large and startling figures.

⁽¹⁹⁾ HAENCHEN, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 238.

⁽²⁰⁾ For a thorough consideration of the function of repetition or “redundancy”, see R. C. TANNEHILL, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation II. The Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis 1990) 74-77.

woman⁽²¹⁾. These parallels suggest not only an appropriate equality but a universality, the given story or message more easily appeals to all humankind.

When she enters, Sapphira is more of a tragic character; her name is not even mentioned. Peter's is given twice (vv. 8.9; cf. v. 3). Moreover, she who knew of the deception about the price for the field (v. 2a) does not even know what happened to her husband (v. 7b). Peter, on the other hand, throughout the whole pericope is portrayed as someone who knows. The fictional audience of the story likewise knows, as does Luke's reader, what happened to her husband; and they are aware of Peter's prophetic ability to unmask falsehood and so anticipate the next verse.

Peter's first question about the price of the field is a trap, for in the second panel he is more aggressive and direct. In the first panel, all of his questions are really more declarative statements than questions which Ananias is expected to answer. Ananias obviously does not answer them. However, in the second panel, Peter begins with an imperative, "Tell me", and asks Sapphira a direct question which she has to answer. She opens her mouth only to say two words of self-condemnation and to confirm herself as a liar. We were already aware that Sapphira, with full knowledge, had collaborated with her husband (v. 2a), and the twice repeated τοσούτου, "for so much (v. 8)", recalls her and her husband's unwillingness to share totally. Luke in the first panel limits Peter's questions and solemn prophetic statement to Ananias (vv. 3-4: σου ... σε ... σοι ... ἐν τῇ σῇ ... ἔθου ... σου ... ἐψεύσω); but in his second question Peter now asks Sapphira, "How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test?" (v. 9a), and so recalls their mutual awareness and guilt. Peter in this second question returns to the declarative style of the first panel, and it is this question which parallels "You did not lie to us (human beings) but to God" (v. 4c). Peter includes both culprits in his summary statement and no longer speaks of "to lie to the Holy Spirit... to God" (vv. 3-4) but of "to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test (πειράσαι)". To be sure, the testing of the Spirit of the Lord was actualized in the lie, but Peter increases the severity of his charge. To lie to the divine is foolish but does not explicitly involve the notion of an arrogant challenge doomed from the start as does "to tempt".

(21) See my *The Unity of Luke's Theology*, 118-126.

Consequently, Peter's first question in the second panel justifies his second one which rephrases and develops the content of his first summary in v. 4c. The prophetic proclamation of v. 9b, "Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out", flows from this second summary but does not outweigh it in importance. The two clauses of v. 9 end respectively with the following statements about Sapphira, "tempt the Spirit of the Lord" and "they will carry you out". The first action leads to the second.

But who is the "Lord" in former phrase? Naturally, one can point to Peter's charges in the first panel that Ananias had lied to the Holy Spirit and to God and so conclude that the phrase "to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test" unites these two charges and so refers to the Spirit "of God". On the other hand, "Spirit of the Lord" (πνεῦμα κυρίου) does not occur frequently in Luke-Acts (cf. Luke 4,18; Acts 8,39). "Lord" in "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me" has to refer to God since Jesus himself is the recipient of the action; and in "the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away" (Acts 8,39) "Lord" is more likely a reference to God, for these words balance off, "Then the angel of the Lord said to Philip" at the beginning of the pericope (v. 26). Nonetheless, there are reasons for understanding "Lord" in 5,9 as a reference to Jesus. Luke's presentation of the Holy Spirit in his Gospel differs from that in Acts where the risen Jesus receives from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and pours him out on the assembled crowd at the first Christian Pentecost (Acts 2,33; cf. vv. 17-21.38-39; 1,2.4-5; 9,17; Luke 24,49). The nearest reference to "Lord" (κύριος), prior to Acts 5,1-11, is 4,33, "With great power the apostles gave testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was on them all"; and scholars are generally agreed on the close relationship among the second major summary (4,32-35), the example of Barnabas (4,36-37) and 5,1-11⁽²²⁾. Moreover, Acts 4,33 speaks of the miraculous activity of the apostles and of Jesus as "Lord" in a context of the early Christians' sharing their possessions and laying the proceeds at the

(22) H.-J. DEGENHARDT, *Lukas, Evangelist der Armen: Besitz und Besitzverzicht in den lukanischen Schriften* (Stuttgart 1965) 162-163, 168-172, suggests how these verses came into their present form. PESCH, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 196, points to some of their common vocabulary.

apostles' feet. Elsewhere, Luke explicitly refers to the Holy Spirit as the "Spirit of Jesus" (16,6-7) and apparently is disposed to interchange "Jesus" and "Spirit" (cf. Luke 12,11-12 and 21,12-15; Acts 20,22-24; 21,11-14). Consequently, it is more likely that "Lord" in 5,9 refers to the risen Jesus (cf. 1 Cor 5,4)⁽²³⁾ and that Luke in Acts 5,1-11 wants to address the relationship of the Trinity to the Christian community.

V. 9 closes with Peter's solemn prophetic statement that those who buried Sappira's husband "will carry you out". This prophecy is much more direct than that spoken to Ananias in v. 4c and surely implies her death; but Peter's statement is more explanatory than condemnatory. It also allows for a double reference in the second panel to the young men who carry Sapphira out and so to her death (cf. vv. 9b.10bc) and is the first information she has of her husband's fate. In fact, each clause of v. 10 ends with an emphatic statement about her death: "died", "found her dead" and "buried her beside her husband". These several references to "death" in the second panel make evident the futility of resisting God's and the Spirit's active presence in the community. Sapphira's death confirms Peter as a prophet like Jesus. "Immediately" does not appear in the first panel about Ananias' death, and here it underlines Peter's prophetic ability and the rapidity with which the Lord can act to defend his community. Nor can it be mere chance that Sapphira falls at Peter's feet, for Luke has already attributed considerable importance to this aspect of the story. Given this emphasis and the literary and figurative nature of the story, Sapphira apparently fell right on top of Ananias' and her specious contribution which would still be at Peter's and the apostles' feet. The money represents the real cause of her and Ananias' deaths because it actualizes their lie to God and the Spirit. As noted above, the feet of the apostles and so of Peter symbolize a place and moment of encounter, where Satan and his agents sought to overcome God, the Spirit (of Jesus?), the apostles, Peter and the Christian community. However, God and the good have prevailed; and Sapphira's falling dead at Peter's feet, on the money which stands for her and her husband's guilt, manifests this victory and their total defeat (cf. Luke 10,18; 11,14-23).

⁽²³⁾ See also F. HAHN, *Christologische Hoheitstitel* (Göttingen 1964) 107, n. 6.

Probably, this reflection should be taken one step further. L. T. Johnson writes about Acts 5,1-11 and about having all things in common that “*the disposition of possessions is a direct symbol of the disposition of the self*”⁽²⁴⁾. J. Dupont expresses much the same idea when he states that one cannot, without deforming it, isolate the more material aspects of community life from its other aspects. The spiritual has to be concretized on the level of property and wealth⁽²⁵⁾. The conduct of Ananias and Sapphira reminds one of the seed that fell among the thorns, “they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruits do not mature” (Luke 8,14; cf. 12,33-34; 18,22-23). Another Lucan verse also comes to mind, “For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it” (Luke 9,24; cf. vv. 23-26).

Acts 5,10bc is a rephrasing of Peter’s prophecy in v.9b and continues the description of its fulfilment. When the young men enter, they find Sapphira dead, so they carry her out and bury her beside her husband. The end of the verse strikes a particularly melancholy note, for as Sapphira and Ananias were united in deception so now they are together in death and the graveyard.

Luke in the second panel transposes the activity of the young men and the fear which comes on those who hear of the event. In Acts 5,11 he generalizes the fear spoken of in v. 5⁽²⁶⁾; it now reaches the whole church and everyone who hears about the event. The “fear” and the effect on individuals outside the community may well explain why Luke in the second panel made this transposition, for it allows for a smoother transition between Acts 5,1-11 and vv. 12-16, which report “None of the rest dared to joined them (the Christians), but the people held them in high esteem” (v. 13) and the many signs and wonders that the apostles (v. 12; cf. v. 2) and Peter (vv. 3-5.9-10.15) work for the people⁽²⁷⁾. Of course, Peter plays a major role in each story.

⁽²⁴⁾ JOHNSON, *The Literary Function*, 202, his emphasis.

⁽²⁵⁾ J. DUPONT, “L’union entre les premiers chrétiens dans les Actes des Apôtres”, *Nouvelles Études sur les Actes des Apôtres* (LD 118; Paris 1984) 299-301, 308-310.

⁽²⁶⁾ H. ZIMMERMANN, *Neutestamentliche Methodenlehre: Darstellung der historisch-kritischen Methode* (Stuttgart 1967) 253, 255.

⁽²⁷⁾ Both pericopes share other Greek vocabulary: ἀνὴρ (Acts 5,1.9.10.14), γυνή (vv. 1.2.7.14), φέρειν (vv. 2.16), γίνεσθαι (vv. 5.7.11.12),

In this last verse of the pericope, a place of emphasis, Luke specifies his intended audience, the whole church and anyone who hears the story. In the early chapters of Acts Luke has the opportunity of addressing the whole church while describing the Christian community in Jerusalem because at the time she constituted all the Christians, and what he says to and about that community can at the same time be addressed to the whole Church. Yet, although he writes for Christians, he remains open to all.

Fear (φόβος; cf. vv. 5.11) is the result of the story in each panel, but it was not Luke's main purpose in writing the story. In fact, in a number of passages most of which are unique to him, Luke writes, "Do not fear" (Luke 1,13.30; 2,10; 5,10; 8,50; 12,4.7.32; Acts 18,9; 27,24). Surely, the virtue of fearing God is recommended⁽²⁸⁾, and "fear" is a natural reaction to any encounter with God or one of his agents⁽²⁹⁾ and also characterizes the stance of outsiders toward the original Christian community (Acts 2,43; 5,11; cf. 2,47a; 5,13). However, fear is always directed toward something else, the reality that justifies it; and in this instance, the reality is the twofold encounter with God and with the activity of his agents. Peter's questions and prophetic proclamations constitute the central aspect of each panel and Luke's main interest and concern in the pericope find expression in Peter's two summary statements (vv. 4c.9a). Surely, Luke's reader would have recognized his or her potential of acting as did Ananias and Sapphira, but would not have been contemplating such an action. Thus, the ordinary reader hears the harshness of the story only indirectly, and Luke's main purpose in relating it was not to stir up fear but to teach that God and the Holy Spirit (of Jesus?) are active in the community and in the apostles, represented by Peter. Naturally, a corollary of this would be the challenge to Christians to accept this truth and so to live, without letting anything like money or the desire for unjust recognition corrupt their vision. The message is more one of encouragement,

ἐκφέρειν (vv. 6.9.10.15), ἔρχομαι (vv. 7.10.15), κύριος (vv. 9.14) and πᾶς or ἅπας (vv. 11.12). Luke may well want to contrast Ananias and Sapphira, who are "carried out" of the apostles' presence dead, with the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits who are "carried" in and cured.

⁽²⁸⁾ Luke 1,50; 12,5; Acts 9,31; 10,2.22.35; 13,16.26; cf. Luke 18,2.4; 19,21; 23,40.

⁽²⁹⁾ E.g. Luke 1,12.65; 2,9; 5,26; 7,16; 8,25.35.37; 9,34.45; 21,26-27; Acts 2,43; 5,5.11; 19,17.

for Christians know that God and the Holy Spirit (of Jesus?) are guarantors of the Church's integrity.

IV. The Encounter between the Divine and the Anti-Divine

Luke in the story of Ananias and Sapphira thoroughly develops the encounter between the divine and anti-divine. All the other characters have secondary roles (cf. Luke 11,14-23; Acts 26,18)⁽³⁰⁾. However, "secondary" should not be understood as "insignificant"; for they are the means through which the divine functions in the community and remain true agents. Their importance is all the greater in Christianity which believes in an incarnation and so more easily accept God's activity in and among human beings.

In Acts 5,1-11 there is an explicit or implicit play on opposites: life/death, Spirit/Satan, true/false, love/aggression, necessity/freedom⁽³¹⁾; and it proves instructive to review what goes with the anti-divine and/or what with the divine. The anti-divine embraces the following: Satan, Ananias and Sapphira, keeping back part of the proceeds and making as if the whole price was being contributed (vv. 2-3 cf. 8-9a), Satan filling one's heart, lying to the Holy Spirit, contriving this deed in one's heart, lying to God, falling down, dying (vv. 5.10), body wrapped up, carried out and buried (vv. 6.10), not knowing, agreeing to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test. Other elements of the pericope go with the divine: God, Holy Spirit of the Lord (Jesus?), the apostles and Peter, his five questions and two prophetic proclamations (vv. 3-4.8a.9) and great fear seized the church and all who heard of it (vv. 5b.11). Some concepts go with both the anti-divine and the divine: "at the apostles' feet (at Peter's feet)" designates a place of encounter with the divine, yet where the lie occurred; the freedom of Ananias and Sapphira (e.g., "with his wife's knowledge", v. 2a; cf. vv. 4.8-9a) because it manifests their guilt and justifies the divine action against them; and the young men (cf. vv. 6.9b.10bc) since their actions demonstrate the fate of those who lie and test

⁽³⁰⁾ THEISSEN, *Miracle Stories*, 43-44.

⁽³¹⁾ A. METTAYER, "Ambiguïté et terrorisme du sacré: Analyse d'un texte des Actes des Apôtres (4,31-5,11)", *SR* 7 (1978) 419. However, I am not sure that Mettayer would agree with my interpretation of the data, nor is it clear to me what he is interpreting as "love".

God and the Holy Spirit of the Lord (Jesus?), but at the same time they are collaborators of Peter. Actually, the young men function almost as stagehands who clear the stage for the next scene.

V. How Does Acts 5,1-11 Fit into its Present Context?

G. Betori provides the best overall analysis of the structure of Acts 2,42-8,4, which he interprets as five narrative unities about the life of the community: 2,42-4,35 (external life), 4,32-5,16 (internal life), 5,12-42 (external life), 5,42-6,8 (internal life) and 6,7-8,4 (external life). These five unities can be further specified as containing overlapping summaries (2,42-47; 4,32-35; 5,12-16; 5,42; 6,7-8; 8,1b-4) and stories (3,1-4,31; 4,36-5,11; 5,17-41; 6,1-6; 6,9-8,1a)⁽³²⁾.

D. Marguerat in his recently proposed narrative structure of Acts 2-5 contends that the message of 5,1-11 should be subordinated to the theme of the larger narrative: the vitality of the community animated by the Spirit in the midst of confrontations with Jewish authorities⁽³³⁾. Marguerat here bases his interpretation on the narrative studies of R.C. Tannehill⁽³⁴⁾. Granted that Marguerat uses a different methodology than ours, nonetheless, some observations seem valid. Since both Marguerat and Tannehill concede that the dominant theme in these chapters is, in fact, as Betori states, the community, is the subordination that Marguerat calls for accurate? Up to Acts 5,1-11 we have only one real confrontation with Jewish authorities (4,1-22). Another appears in 5,17-42, beyond 5,1-11; but should we not be loyal to the development of the narrative? In the earlier chapters of Acts, there are no direct confrontations with Jewish authorities⁽³⁵⁾, and the major (2,42-47; 4,32-35; 5,12-16)⁽³⁶⁾ and minor summaries⁽³⁷⁾ all

⁽³²⁾ G. BETORI, *Perseguitati a causa del Nome: Strutture dei racconti di persecuzione in Atti 1,12-8,4* (AnBib 97; Rome 1981) 49. However, other than its last verse Acts 4,23-31 does not appear to deal with the external life of the community; nor is 5,12-16 limited to the internal life.

⁽³³⁾ See his interesting article, "La mort d'Ananias et Saphira (Ac 5,1-11) dans la stratégie narrative de Luc", *NTS* 39 (1993) 211-217, 226.

⁽³⁴⁾ *The Narrative Unity*, II, 48-50, 63-79.

⁽³⁵⁾ But see Acts 1,16; 2,23; 3,13-15.17.

⁽³⁶⁾ J. ROLOFF, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (NTD 5; Göttingen 1981) 192-193.

⁽³⁷⁾ See Acts 1,14; 2,41.47; 4,4; 5,14.42; 6,7-8; 9,31; 11,21.24; 12,24; 16,5; 19,20; 21,20; 28,30-31 (but cf. 8,1b-4).

concentrate on community and this is clearly also true of 5,1-11. Not only does Betori's understanding of Acts 2,42-8,4 as describing the life of the community square better with the data, but some scholars believe that Luke in the early chapters of Acts pictures the ideal Christian community⁽³⁸⁾. A number of words and phrases further support Luke's community concern in these early chapters: "together" (Acts 1,14-15; 2,1.44.46-47; 4,24.26; 5,12; cf. 8,16), "brothers and sisters" (1,14-16; 6,3), "fellowship" (2,42), "had all things in common" (2,44; 4,32), "believers" (2,44; 4,32; 5,14), "assembly" (4,32; 6,2.5), "of one heart and soul" (4,32), "church" (5,11) and disciples (6,1.2.7). "All" and "every" (Acts 4,10.16.21.24.32-33; 5,5.11.12; 6,4) should likewise be included here. Although Acts 5,1-11 and 6,1-6 betray contradictory tendencies⁽³⁹⁾, nonetheless, these, too, serve Luke's portrayal of how Christians live in community. Acts 5,1-11 is part of a Lucan reflection (4,32-5,16)⁽⁴⁰⁾ on the community's life and relates the most pernicious actions against the internal life of the Christian community found in the whole of Acts.

VI. Parallels to Acts 5,1-11

1. *Proposed Parallels to Acts 5,1-11*

Various parallels have been proposed for Acts 5,1-11. Some of these do not appear that valid⁽⁴¹⁾, but a brief review of other

⁽³⁸⁾ See H. VON CAMPENHAUSEN, "Tradition and Succession in the Second Century", *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power* (London 1969) 153; C.H. TALBERT, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes, and the Genre of Luke-Acts* (SBLMS 20; Missoula, MT 1974) 101; DUPONT, *Nouvelles Études*, 296-310. C.M. MARTINI, "L'esclusione dalla comunità del popolo di Dio e il nuovo Israele secondo Atti 3,23", *Bib* 50 (1969) 3, 13, sees this ideal description in the first three chapters of Acts. For a synthesis of this interpretation for the early chapters of Acts, see my *The Unity of Luke's Theology*, 20, 132-133.

⁽³⁹⁾ TALBERT, *Literary Patterns*, 101.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ S.J. NOORDA, "Scene and Summary, A Proposal for Reading Acts 4,32-5,16", *Les Actes des Apôtres: Traditions, rédaction, théologie* (ed. J. KREMER) (BETL 48; Gembloux 1979) 475-483, defends the compositional unity of Acts 4,32-5,16.

⁽⁴¹⁾ See, for example, 1 Kgs 14,1-20, the death of Abijah, the son of Jeroboam, and Num 16,1-49, the punishment of Koran, Dathan and

proposed parallels proves useful. The rare word, νοσφίζεσθαι, appears in Josh 7,1 and Acts 5,2-3 (cf. 2 Macc 4,32; Titus 2,10). Although both the story of the sin of Achan and its punishment (Josh 7) and Acts 5,1-11 speak of misuse of wealth in relationship to God and of the consequent death, I. H. Marshall correctly evaluates the situation when he states, "...at most Luke was conscious of a typological resemblance"⁽⁴²⁾. R. Pesch makes the interesting suggestion of a parallel between the Ananias and Sapphira story and that of Susanna. Certainly, there are possible parallels to the Susanna story in our pericope. The Holy Spirit is roused in Daniel (v. 45), and both hearings (vv. 52-55.56-59) of the unjust judges are structured similarly and have much the same wording of the punishment. Also, one finds the statement of amazement and the extirpation from the community (vv. 60-62b)⁽⁴³⁾. However, we have seen Luke himself elsewhere use diptych structures, and there is no convincing reason to claim a direct connection between the two passages. Nor can a direct relationship between the Ananias and Sapphira story and the practices of poverty in the Qumran community be established⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Abiram and of the congregation. WEISER, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 140-142, lists other parallels. R. C. CULLEY, "Punishment Stories in the Legends of the Prophets", *Orientation by Disorientation: Studies in Literary and Biblical Literary Criticism* (Fs. William A. Beardslee; [ed. R. A. SPENCER] Pittsburgh 1980) 167-181, points to a "wrong-wrong punished" action sequence in 1Kgs 13,7-20; 20,33-43; 21; 2 Kgs 1,2-17; 2,23-25; 5,20-27. The well-known conjecture of P.-H. MENOUD, "La mort d'Ananias et de Saphira", *Aux sources de la tradition: Mélanges offerts à Maurice Goguel* (Bibliothèque théologique; Neuchâtel-Paris 1950) 146-154, has not convinced most scholars.

⁽⁴²⁾ I. H. MARSHALL, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids 1980) 111. See also K. LAKE – H. J. CADBURY, *The Beginnings of Christianity: Part I: The Acts of the Apostles. Vol. IV English Translation and Commentary* (ed. F. J. FOAKES JACKSON – K. LAKE) (Grand Rapids 1979) 50, and MARGUERAT, "La mort d'Ananias et Saphira", 222-223. On the other hand, JOHNSON, *The Literary Function*, 205-206, argues that, given the certain verbal allusion and the major structural similarities, Luke was using the Achan story as a rough model for his own story and that he intended it to communicate much the same message:

⁽⁴³⁾ PESCH, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 196-197.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ KLAUCK, "Gütergemeinschaft", 78-79, but see B. J. CAPPER, "The Interpretation of Acts 5.4", *JSNT* 19 (1983) 126-128.

Recently, D. Marguerat proposed that Acts 5,1-11 is a midrash of the fall in Gen 3⁽⁴⁵⁾. He sees the following similarities: destruction of the original harmony, "Of one heart and soul" (cf. Acts 4,32: καρδία καὶ ψυχὴ μία), the figure of Satan whom Jewish tradition saw behind that of the serpent, origin of the fall located in the sins of the couple, lying to God⁽⁴⁶⁾, expulsion at the end of the account (cf. Gen 3,23). Marguerat feels that his interpretation explains the curious trait of Luke's insistence on the complicity of a man and a woman, and he finds further support for his proposal in the Greek *Acta Andreae* where the fall is re-read with a marked insistence on the accord between Adam and Eve. Marguerat concludes that his theory throws new light on the deception of Ananias and Sapphira as a reduplication of the original sin of Adam and Eve. In Acts the lie to the Spirit constitutes the original sin in the Church whose members are weak, but the plan to be a community of love is saved by God's judgment.

Marguerat's proposal presents a number of difficulties. First of all, as noted above⁽⁴⁷⁾, Luke likes to draw parallels between a man and a woman; so it is not particularly curious that he would do this in Acts 5,1-11. Moreover, there is no verbal connection between Acts 5,1-11 and Gen 3; and the latter passage does not explicitly mention Satan nor the Spirit, nor does Marguerat offer any proof that Luke was aware of any association of the serpent of Genesis with Satan. In the Genesis story there is no parallel to Peter, who we have seen plays a major role in the Ananias and Sapphira story. Furthermore, the sin of Adam and Eve consists in their disobedience to God, not in lying to God; rather the serpent lies to Eve and deceives her, and she leads her husband astray. Nor can Marguerat show that we have reason to believe that Luke knew about the Jewish interpretation of Gen 3,10 as a lie. Although potentially true, in fact, the conduct of Ananias and Sapphira does not lead to any kind of fall for others nor to the destruction of the original harmony of the community. Ananias and Sapphira could represent others who might behave like them, but they do not stand for all of humankind nor even for the Christian community. Also, it is doubtful that in the Genesis story Adam and Eve are equal partners

⁽⁴⁵⁾ MARGUERAT, "La mort d'Ananias et Sapphira", 223-225.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Marguerat sees a lie in Gen 3,10.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ See n. 21.

as are Ananias and Sapphira, and the former are expelled from the garden. They do not die; but live with the hope that God is still with them. Finally, J.-M. Prieur dates the *Acta Andreae* as between 150 and 200 AD, but closer to the former, and views it as a product of an age whose spiritual atmosphere was influenced by Platonism and Neophythagorism and which blossomed in the second and third centuries⁽⁴⁸⁾. So, in the opinion of most authors, *Acta Andreae* would post-date Acts and come from a considerably different spiritual environment. Consequently, even given the loose kind of connection permitted by midrash, Marguerat's proposal does not prove convincing.

2. *Lucan Parallels to the Ananias and Sapphira Story*

The Lucan parallels (Luke 4,1-13; 22,3-6.47-48; Acts 1,16-26; 8,8-24; 12,22-23; 13,6-12; 19,13-17) to the Ananias and Sapphira story are more productive. To begin with, the passages are Lucan; so the possibility of his being influenced by his own thought elsewhere is definitely present. Four of these parallels provide us with a deeper insight into the story of Ananias and Sapphira; and the other two of them appear to have influenced Luke in his composition of the story.

3. *Simon Magus (Acts 8,9-24)*

The story of Simon Magus (Acts 8,9-24) offers the following parallels: each story begins with an identical introductory formula, "But a man named ..." (5,1; 8,9); addresses the misuse of money (5,2-4.8; 8,18,23); and in each episode the Spirit is closely associated with Peter and the apostle and the sins are against the Spirit and God (5,3.4bc.9; 8,15-18.20-21). Also there is at least the possibility of dire results from the respective sins (5,5.10; 8,20.23-24), and Peter's words play a central role in each story (5,3-4.8a.9; 8,20-23) and bear on the use of money and on the Spirit. Each story describes in some detail the evilness of the actions (5,3.4b.9a; 8,20-21.23) and underlines the element of human freedom; for Simon is instructed, "Repent therefore of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you" (8,22; cf. 5,4.8-9a), yet in the Simon Magus story

⁽⁴⁸⁾ ABD I, 244-247.

Satan is not mentioned and repentance is still available⁽⁴⁹⁾. This parallel to Acts 8,9-24 supports the importance we have attributed to Peter's words and to the element of human freedom in the Ananias and Sapphira story, yet their deaths mark a notable difference.

4. *The Death of Agrippa I (Acts 12,20-23)*

The narrative about the death of Agrippa I recalls Ananias' and Sapphira's lack of respect for God and their own sudden deaths. Both stories have ironical aspects. Sapphira knows and yet does not know, and Herod takes seriously the feigned adulation of those from Tyre and Sidon, "The voice of a god, and not of a mortal" (12,22). Moreover, the punishment is as severe as that in Acts 5,1-11; and the element of freedom appears because Herod "had not given the glory to God" (v.23a). Luke explicitly writes of Herod, "an angel of the Lord struck him down", and bluntly explains, "he was eaten by worms and died" (v.23). Both stories report the futility of not respecting God, but that of Ananias and Sapphira strikes one as a more developed and polished narrative.

5. *The Apostles Preach in Cyprus (Acts 13,4-12)*

Surely, Luke draws a comparison between Peter in Acts 5,1-11 and Paul in Acts 13,6-12. Both events are punishment miracles⁽⁵⁰⁾. By implication, the Spirit acts through Peter and the apostles, and Paul is explicitly described as filled with the Spirit (13,9). Since Paul was also sent by the Spirit (13,4) and Elymas' sin is described as "making crooked the straight paths of the Lord", the latter's offense is similar to that of Ananias' and Sapphira's: lying to God and the Holy Spirit (of Jesus?). What Paul proclaims is identified as the straight paths of the Lord just as lying to Peter (and the apostles) was viewed as lying to God and the Holy Spirit. Both Peter's (5,3-4.9) and Paul's (13,10-11) words introduce the punishment, but the ultimate source of the punishment is God (the Spirit) or the Lord (13,11). The sudden deaths of Ananias and

⁽⁴⁹⁾ See BROWN, *Apostasy and Perseverance*, 110-113. However, like many other Lucan scholars, I cannot accept Brown's (98-114) understanding of the Ananias and Sapphira story as an example of apostasy (cf. Luke 12,10).

⁽⁵⁰⁾ See n. 4.

Sapphira (5,5.10) compare to the sudden blinding of Elymas (13,11), and both incidents end with fear or amazement (5,5.11; 13,12). Finally, Elymas is characterized as "You son of the devil" (13,9), while Peter asks Ananias, "Why has Satan filled your heart?" (5,3). On the other hand, Paul more directly pronounces the punishment, and Elymas is only going to be blind "for a time" ⁽⁵¹⁾. Nor does the story about Paul's preaching in Cyprus have any strong community reflection or the double emphasis permitted by two scenes.

6. *The Sons of Sceva (Acts 19,13-17)*

The sons of Sceva were Jewish and so non-believers who thought they were doing a good deed. No human agent like Peter challenges these would-be exorcists nor explains their evil deed because the story is comparatively simple and straightforward. The evil spirit itself leaps on them and so overpowers them that they flee the house naked and wounded. However, their punishment is comparatively light; and the fear is limited to the residents of Asia. These differences again help us appreciate the importance that Luke attaches to the story of Ananias and Sapphira, who are believers and know that they are doing wrong, and to the presence of God and the Spirit (of Jesus?) in the community. Also, the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira is death, and fear comes upon the whole church and everyone who hears of the event.

7. *The Story of Judas (Luke 22,3-6.21-22.47-48; Acts 1,16-26)*

The story of Ananias and Sapphira parallels that of Judas. In both stories, Satan is the transcendent cause of the sin which is rooted in "unrighteous mammon", and a piece of property is involved. As Judas, both Ananias and Sapphira were free, and their sin was punished with sudden death ⁽⁵²⁾. However, more needs to be said. In neither story is God or the Holy Spirit explicitly said to have killed Judas or Ananias and Sapphira. These latter three are also hypocrites who try to appear as just individuals; Judas with a kiss, and Ananias (and Sapphira) by laying the "price" of the field at

⁽⁵¹⁾ G. BAUMBACH, *Das Verständnis des Bösen in den synoptischen Evangelien* (Hrsg. H. URNER) (Theologische Arbeiten 19; Berlin 1963) 168-169.

⁽⁵²⁾ BROWN, *Apostasy and Perseverance*, 106-107. See also STÄHLIN, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 83; W. DIETRICH, *Das Petrusbild der lukanischen Schriften* (Stuttgart 1972) 234-237; BAUMBACH, *Das Verständnis des Bösen*, 189.

the feet of the apostles. Moreover, Jesus plays a role in the story of Judas which reminds us of that of Peter in the account of Ananias and Sapphira. At the Last Supper, Jesus prophesies of Judas, "But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!" (Luke 22,21-22). Later, on the Mount of Olives, Jesus asks, "Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?" (22,48). The fact that Peter through reference to the prophetic message of Scripture and in summary fashion later explains Judas' fate (Acts 1,16-20) supports the contention that in the narrative of Ananias and Sapphira Luke compares him to Jesus, a prophet who perceives people's true motive. Finally, since in the whole of Luke's Gospel no action is more despicable than Judas's betrayal of Jesus, the Lucan suggestion is that Christians should react similarly to the deception of Ananias and Sapphira. Judas betrays Jesus, and Ananias and Sapphira have no respect for God and the Holy Spirit (of Jesus?) present in the community.

8. *Jesus' Temptation (Luke 4,1-13)*

Two scholars point to the probability that Luke intended the Ananias and Sapphira story as a parallel to Jesus' temptation⁽⁵³⁾. The Holy Spirit and the devil (Satan) play a significant role in each story which occurs toward the beginning of its respective volume. The same Greek root (πειράζειν) expresses the tempting of Jesus, of God and of the Spirit (of Jesus?; Luke 4,2.12; Acts 5,9; cf. Luke 11,16; Acts 15,10). Each story touches on behaving with integrity before God, and there is an encounter between the divine and the anti-divine in which ultimately the devil (Satan) and his representatives are overcome.

In fact, sufficient attention has not been paid to this parallel between the Ananias and Sapphira story and Jesus' temptation, yet it best explains Luke's purpose in the former story. Scholars have observed that Luke draws numerous parallels between Jesus and the

⁽⁵³⁾ For example, see PESCH, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 204; WEISER, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 146. See also BAUMBACH, *Das Verständnis des Bösen*, 169-170, 175.

Christians⁽⁵⁴⁾ and a parallel between Jesus' baptism and Pentecost⁽⁵⁵⁾; both of these latter events speak of the descent of the Spirit, some visible manifestation and noise (Luke 3,22; Acts 2,2-3), and Luke designates Pentecost a baptism (Acts 1,5; 11,16-17). Right after his baptism and genealogy and in contrast to Ananias whose heart Satan has filled, Jesus, "full of the Holy Spirit" and "led by the Spirit", undergoes his temptation and vanquishes the devil. As Peter's encounter with Ananias and Sapphira constitutes the center of the pericope, so the heart of the temptation story consists in the encounter between Jesus and the devil. The devil is lying or at least misrepresenting things because each of Jesus' answers is a corrective and reveals his integrity. So, Jesus begins his earthly ministry with an all-important victory over the devil, and that is exactly what the early church experiences when its chief representative, Peter, as God's and the Holy Spirit's agent, protects it from the divisive sin of Ananias and Sapphira. Luke wants to show that as in the case of Jesus the early church cannot be compromised or deceived by Satan because ultimately one is not lying only to human beings but to God and the Holy Spirit (of Jesus?). The church is going to be able to carry out its mission just as Jesus did his; it is futile to think or act differently. This is all the more true since Jesus is now risen, and Satan has no power over his activity in the church⁽⁵⁶⁾. The complete

(⁵⁴) I have summarized much of the evidence in *The Unity of Luke's Theology*, 62-94; for further information and bibliographical data see my "Parallels between Jesus and His Disciples in Luke-Acts: A Further Study", *BZ* 27 (1983) 195-212.

(⁵⁵) M. D. GOULDER, *Type and History in Acts* (London 1964) 54-55; G.W.H. LAMPE, "The Holy Spirit in the Writings of St. Luke", *Studies in the Gospels* (Fs. R.H. Lightfoot; Oxford 1955) 159. SCHNEIDER, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 257, writes, "Die Pfingsterzählung mit der ersten Predigt des Petrus und dem Summarium über das Leben der Urgemeinde (2,1-47) entspricht—was den Aufbau des Buches betrifft—den Szenen der Taufe Jesu und seiner Antrittspredigt in Nazaret in der Evangelien-schrift (Lk 3,21f; 4,13-30)". J. KREMER, *Pfingstbericht und Pfingstgeschehen: eine exegetische Untersuchung zu Apg 2,1-13* (SBS 63/64; Stuttgart 1973) 208-211, grants a number of similarities between Jesus' baptism and Pentecost but maintains that there are differences. He regards it as "hardly a conscious" or "emphasized" parallel.

(⁵⁶) Elsewhere, "Activity of the Risen Jesus in Luke-Acts", *Bib* 52 (1981) 471-487, I have shown that the Lucan Jesus is active after his resurrection. Also, we have already noted that "Lord" in the phrase, "the Spirit of the Lord" (Acts 5,9), is a likely reference to Jesus.

and harsh victory over Ananias and Sapphira is not so much a victory over them as over Satan and over any notion or action which implies that the church is not God's doing and does not enjoy the Spirit's presence and guardianship. The very harshness of the story makes the point.

Conclusion

Although 1 Cor 5,1-6.13 suggests the possibility of a historical kernel for Acts 5,1-11, this article proposes composition criticism as a more productive methodology. Some of the questions raised about this pericope really do not lead to a better understanding of Luke's intention. Acts 5,1-11 is a rule miracle of punishment which presents the reader with surprises: Ananias and Sapphira do not truly imitate Barnabas nor are their deaths anticipated. The literary form reveals the seriousness of observing God's will and explains the severity of the punishment; nonetheless, Luke does not explicitly say that God killed Ananias and Sapphira.

Acts 5,1-11 forms a diptych which falls into two panels (vv. 1-6.7-11) with similar structure and content. Both panels give considerable emphasis to the apostles and, especially, to Peter and to the freedom of Ananias and Sapphira. Data about Peter takes up about half of the whole pericope which he dominates. He is the main agent of the divine; and his questions and prophetic statements reveal Satan as the main cause of the evil, the nature of what Ananias and Sapphira did and their freedom. Everything else either introduces or flows from what Peter has to say. The feet of the apostles (and of Peter) are a place of encounter with God, the Holy Spirit (and Jesus?). Surely, the human agents are subordinated to the divine and the anti-divine (Satan), but this hardly means that they are to be dismissed as insignificant. Without them there is no story, and the divine and anti-divine could not be entering the life of the Christian community. So, the best summary of what Ananias and Sapphira did, and of the pericope, is Peter's statement, "You did not lie to us (human beings) but to God" (v.4c), rephrased and intensified in, "How it is that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test?" (v.9a). Both panels see the respective deaths, being carried out and buried as a confirmation of the futility of lying to God and his agents and as a manifestation of victory over Satan and over his agent's deceptive behavior in the community. The result is fear.

The second panel develops the first in a number of ways. Significantly, even if it be in relationship to an evil deed, a woman is portrayed as the man of the previous panel. While Ananias is almost totally passive in the first panel, Sapphira in the second is more tragic. She, who knew before, now does not even know about her husband's death, but everyone else does. Moreover, Peter is more aggressive and direct, and his interaction with her reveals her freedom and deceptive collaboration with her husband and proves her a liar. Sapphira speaks only to condemn herself. Peter increases the severity of the charge and simultaneously rephrases his summary statement about lying to the Holy Spirit and God with the words, "to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test". There are good reasons for interpreting "Lord" in this phrase as a reference to Jesus; and so Luke would be presenting the Trinity as active in the life of the community and, especially, in the apostles and Peter. Peter's competence as a prophet like Jesus finds immediate confirmation because no sooner does he say that the young men who buried her husband are at the door and will soon carry Sapphira out, than she falls dead and is carried out and buried beside her husband. She falls dead at the feet of Peter and apparently right on top of her and her husband's specious offering. As Ananias and Sapphira actualized their lie and testing of God and of the Spirit (of Jesus?) at the feet of the apostles (and of Peter) and there encountered the divine, so it is fitting place for the ultimate sign of their detection and defeat.

This encounter between the divine and anti-divine is thoroughly developed, and there is an explicit or implicit play on opposites. Luke in the second panel generalizes the "fear" which now affects the whole church and everyone who hears of the event. Thus, he informs us of his audience, the whole church, to whom his message is that God and the Holy Spirit of the Lord (Jesus?) are active in the community and in its leaders, particularly Peter, and that nothing like money or the unjust desire for recognition should lead anyone astray.

Acts 2,42-8,4 present the external and internal life of the whole Christian community and so constitute an ideal place to address all Christians. Acts 5,1-11 treats the internal life. The major theme of the early chapters of Acts is the Christian community, and it is against this background that the story of Ananias and Sapphira must be interpreted.

A number of parallels to Acts 5,1-11 have been suggested. It resembles Josh 7 typologically; but no direct relationship of the story of Ananias and Sapphira with Gen 3, the Susanna story or the practice of poverty in the Qumran community has been demonstrated. The Lucan parallels (Luke 4,1-13; 22,3-6.21-22; Acts 1,16-25; 8,8-24; 12,22-23; 13,6-12; 19,13-17) prove more helpful. Not only do they bring up many of the themes of Acts 5,1-11, but they also alert us to how it differs from them in the importance given to Peter, the emphasis on human freedom and the presence of God and the Spirit (of Jesus?) in the Christian community, the severity of the punishment, the extent of the fear and the double emphasis achieved through repetition of the story (vv. 1-6.7-11). The stories of Judas and of Jesus' temptation prove most similar to our pericope. The story of Judas reveals the heinousness of Ananias' and Sapphira's sin and along with Jesus' temptation provides the best explanation of their harsh punishment. As Ananias and Sapphira, Judas is a hypocrite; but Peter in Acts 5,1-11 resembles Jesus who prophesies Judas' action and fate and who in the temptation story confronts the misrepresentations and lies of the devil. In fact, the temptation story probably best explains Luke's purpose in the Ananias and Sapphira story, for Jesus begins his earthly ministry with an all-important victory over the devil, and so similarly, through the activity of God and the Holy Spirit in Peter, the infant church overcomes Satan's activity in the divisive sin of Ananias and Sapphira⁽⁵⁷⁾.

Pontifical Biblical Institute
Via della Pilotta, 25
I-00187 Rome

Robert F. O'TOOLE, SJ

SOMMAIRE

«Ce n'est pas aux hommes que tu as menti, mais à Dieu» (Ac 5,4c): cette affirmation, développée au v. 9a, résume le message de Luc en Ac 5,1-11. L'étude de la composition («composition criticism») de ce passage considère tour à tour la forme littéraire, la structure en diptyque, le contenu, la rencontre entre le divin et son contraire, et le contexte de ces versets. Après un examen des parallèles, l'histoire de Judas et celle de la tentation de Jésus se révèlent les plus proches du récit en question. De même que Jésus commence son ministère par une victoire importante sur le démon, ainsi la présence de Dieu et du Saint-Esprit en Pierre et dans l'Église naissante réussissent à vaincre Satan qui agit en Ananie et Saphire.

(57) This suggests Matt 16,16-19 as another parallel to Acts 5,1-11.

ANIMADVERSIONES

“Days of Shiloh” in the Kingdom of Israel

According to 1 Kgs 12,26-28, the only purpose of the cultic reform of Jeroboam I was to prevent his subjects' pilgrimage to Jerusalem where they could succumb to the hostile propaganda of the Temple priesthood loyal to David's heirs. While it seems doubtless that the schism was at least in part politically motivated, a question arises: was Jeroboam merely trying to tackle a minor, though sensitive, administrative issue? Or maybe his intention was to implement a profound religious change, thus sealing the recent secession of the northern tribes and making their withdrawal from the kingdom built by David and Solomon irrevocable?

Answers suggested by different scholars cover the whole spectrum of possibilities — from attempts to prove that nothing less than a new religion was introduced⁽¹⁾ to assertions that Jeroboam was just imitating “the true cult in Jerusalem, complete with gods, shrines, priests and Sukkot festival”⁽²⁾, i.e. the cult of Yahweh. More sophisticated, mixed explanations may also be found; according to one of them, Jeroboam, a Yahwist or a “half-Yahwist” himself, deliberately or inadvertently chose his god to be represented by an old Canaanite fertility symbol, thus paving the way to religious syncretism and, ultimately, to paganism⁽³⁾.

Unfortunately, the text of 1 Kgs 12,26-33, seemingly abounding in valuable details, belongs (as clearly demonstrated by v.30a) to Jeroboam's opponents⁽⁴⁾ who could provide just an external, and rather superficial, description of his cult. The most important data that could provide a clue to the purport of Jeroboam's reform are withheld or missing. *Inter alia*, we are not told whether the king invited a specific priestly house to serve his golden calves. V. 31 informs us that Jeroboam “made priests from all the

(1) W. F. ALBRIGHT, *From the Stone Age to Christianity* (New York 1957) 299; T. J. MEEK, *Hebrew Origins* (New York 1950) 160. According to L. R. BAILEY, “The Golden Calf”, *HUCA* 42 (1971) 97-115, Jeroboam worshiped the Mesopotamian lunar deity Sin, and E. DANIELIUS, “The Sins of Jeroboam Ben-Nabat”, *JQR* 58 (1967/68) 95-114, 204-223, maintains that the golden calves or, rather, heifers, symbolized Hathor, the Egyptian goddess.

(2) R. L. COHN, “Literary Technique in the Jeroboam Narrative”, *ZAW* 97 (1985) 31. Cf. also E. NIELSEN, *Shechem: A Traditio-Historical Investigation* (Copenhagen 1959) 188-202, especially 193.

(3) R. DE VAUX, *The Bible and the Ancient Near East* (New York 1966) 100-101; S. J. DEVRIES, *1 Kings* (Word Biblical Commentary 12; Waco, TX 1985) 162-163. O. EISSFELDT, “Lade und Stierbild”, *ZAW* 58 (1940/41) 199-215, treats the Golden Calf of Aaron as a *führersymbol*.

(4) *Apud* DEVRIES, *1 Kings*, 161-162, citing B. MAZAR, *The Cities of the Priests and Levites* (VTS 7; Leiden 1960) 193-205. Cf. also S. L. MCKENZIE, *The Trouble with Kings* (VTS 42; Leiden 1991) 57-58.

families [sc. tribes] (⁶) of the people, who were not of the sons of Levi". But this statement, as it becomes clear from v. 32, pertains exclusively to the sanctuary of Bethel and leaves the situation in Dan obscure. Moreover, even this information, though perfectly matching J. Wellhausen's threefold pattern of development of the Israelite priesthood (⁷), is generally dismissed by modern scholars as a piece of Levitic propaganda (⁸). Taking into account the story of the Golden Calf in Exod 32 where Aaron is depicted as an active participant of the sin or even as the chief culprit (vv. 21, 25), F.M. Cross supposed that the sanctuary of Bethel with its bull-iconography was manned by a Levitic clan belonging, or thought to belong, to the Aaronide stock (⁹). But this is convincingly shown by B. Halpern to be impossible from the political point of view: being closely connected with the Jerusalem Temple and David's dynasty, the Aaronides hardly could support Jeroboam and be trusted by him (¹⁰). As Exod 32, obviously charging Aaron and, by implication, the Aaronides with being at least accomplices in the worship of the Golden Calf, may not be easily discarded (¹⁰), B. Halpern had to develop an ingenious but intricate hypothesis presuming the existence of three branches of the Mushite Levites, two of them (those of Bethel and Dan) worshipping golden calves and one (Shiloh) vigorously opposing them and expressing its utmost indignation in a tale implying that no true follower of Moses may participate in such an abomination (¹¹). This picture, though exquisitely drawn, denies us any chance to determine the purport of Jeroboam's religious reform. What may be said, indeed, about the meaning of the bull-iconography if branches of the same clan were so deeply disagreed about it that one of them even accused the other two of deviation from the basic principles set by the common ancestor?

As B. Halpern's hypothesis virtually exhausts in this respect the paradigm of rivalry between the Mushites and the Aaronides, other possibilities must be examined. In my opinion, they are provided by Judg 18,30:

(⁶) This reading, supported by the usage of *qəšōt* in Judg 18,2, seems to be preferable to the traditional "from all the ranks of the people". Certainly, other *tribes*, and not "classes" were to be contrasted to the sons of Levi (*contra* S. TALMON, "Divergencies in Calendar-Reckoning in Ephraim and Judah" *VT* 8 [1958] 50-51). This correction, as I will try to show further, is not unimportant.

(⁷) Cf. J. WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (Edinburgh 1885) 121-151. See also K. MÖHLENBRINK, "Die levitischen Überlieferungen des Alten Testaments", *ZAW* 11 (1934) 184-231.

(⁸) So, e.g., B. HALPERN, "Levitic Participation in the Reform Cult of Jeroboam I", *JBL* 95 (1976) 32; DeVRIES, *1 Kings*, 161-162. For another opinion see DE VAUX, *The Bible*, 106.

(⁹) F.M. CROSS, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA 1973) 198-199.

(¹⁰) HALPERN, "Levitic Participation", 34-35.

(¹¹) In spite of M. NOTH, *Exodus* (OTL; Philadelphia 1962) 244-248, arguing that the original Golden Calf narrative did not mention Aaron. Cf. CROSS, *Canaanite Myth*, 198-199; HALPERN, "Levitic Participation", 33.

(¹²) HALPERN, "Levitic Participation", 40-41.

And the sons of Dan set up the carving: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses⁽¹²⁾, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land.

This remark, sometimes termed “unexpected” or “surprising”⁽¹³⁾, is generally believed to prove, together with Josh 21,27-33 and 1 Chr 6,56-61 (71-76), that the sanctuary of Dan was controlled by priests claiming to be descendants of Moses⁽¹⁴⁾. Though correct, this point requires further elaboration.

The dating, the authorship and the purpose of Judg 17–18 are uncertain⁽¹⁵⁾. But there is little doubt that v.30b (beginning with the words “... and Jonathan, the son of Gershom...”⁽¹⁶⁾) could not appear before the second half of the 8th century BC as it contains a clear reference to the expulsion of the Israelites either from Upper Galilee by Tiglath-Pileser (734/33 BC; cf. 2 Kgs 15,29) or from the former Kingdom of Israel in general by Salmaneser (722 BC; cf. 2 Kgs 17,6)⁽¹⁶⁾. This is a gloss (as proved by duplication of v.31a in v.30a)⁽¹⁷⁾ that could be added by an editor conflating different sources⁽¹⁸⁾ or, more probably, by an intelligent and knowledgeable reader seeking to fill an obvious gap in the pericope by providing the name of the hitherto anonymous young Levite. This is done in a singular way. We are told who the founder of the Dan-based priestly dynasty was and what was his descent; but the

⁽¹²⁾ The suspended *nun* of the Massoretic text turning Moses (*mōšeh*) into Manasseh (*mēnaššeh*) could appear only after the Book of Judges was canonized and may be disregarded. Neither Manasseh, the son of Jacob and eponymous ancestor of an Israelite tribe, nor Manasseh, the king of Judah, is known to have a son named Gershom. Septuagint MSS have both Moses and Manasseh here. See also y. Berakhot 10, 12d; b. BB 109b.

⁽¹³⁾ See, e.g., J. A. SOGGIN, *Judges* (OTL; Philadelphia 1981) 276; M. HARAN, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford 1978) 77.

⁽¹⁴⁾ So, e.g., WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena*, 143; J. F. MOORE, *Judges* (ICC; Edinburgh 1958, reprint from 1895) 402; TALMON, “Divergencies”, 52-53; CROSS, *Canaanite Myth*, 197; M. ABERBACH – L. SMOLAR, “Aaron, Jeroboam and the Golden Calves”, *JBL* 86 (1967) 136; HALPERN, “Levitic Participation”, 34.

⁽¹⁵⁾ For various views see Y. AMIT, “Hidden Polemic in the Conquest of Dan: Judges XVII-XVIII”, *VT* 40 (1990) 4-20; R. G. BOLING, *Judges* (AB; Garden City, NY 1975) 266-267; HALPERN, “Levitic Participation”, 36-38; A. MALAMAT, “The Danite Migration and the Pan-Israelite Exodus-Conquest”, *Bib* 51 (1970) 1-16; MOORE, *Judges*, 365-372; M. NOTH, “The Background of Judges 17–18”, *Israel's Prophetic Heritage. Essays in Honor of James W. Muilenburg* (London 1962) 68-85; SOGGIN, *Judges*, 269; F. A. SPINA, “The Dan Story Historically Reconsidered”, *JSOT* 4 (1977) 60-71.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Alternative interpretations proposed in rabbinical commentaries are hardly plausible. For example, according to Kimchi, the capture of the Ark by the Philistines (cf. 1 Sam 4) is meant here, while Ralbag maintains that the reference is to the “oppression” of the sons of Israel by Jabin, the king of Canaan (cf. Judg 4,2-3).

⁽¹⁷⁾ Cf. NOTH, “The Background”, 70.

⁽¹⁸⁾ So J. WELLHAUSEN, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (Berlin 1899) 227-230; K. BUDDE, *Das Buch der Richter erklärt* (Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament VIII; Leipzig – Tübingen 1897) 123-125; MOORE, *Judges*, 366-372, 401.

writer stops short of identifying him with the nameless young Levite presumably invited by the tribe of Dan to follow them in their migration. Such singularity seems to have only one explanation. The glossator knew for sure (from his own experience or from traditions that were not too old and therefore could be checked) that the priests officiating at Dan prior to the expulsion not just claimed to be of the Mushite-Gershomite stock in general but also remembered the name of their direct ancestor; this information he could not or would not withhold. At the same time, he had certain doubts concerning Jonathan's identification with the young Levite of Judg 17-18⁽¹⁹⁾ and thus chose not to insist on it; this possibility was just hinted at by the insertion. Thus, Judg 18,30b represents an independent tradition, originally not connected in any way with the main text of Judg 17-18 and tentatively appended to it only at a later stage, at least 200 years after Jeroboam's reform and 300 years after the sanctuary of Dan was allegedly founded (according to Judg 17,6, “in those days there was no king in Israel”, i.e. the sanctuary was presumed to exist before the last quarter of the 11th century BC).

If the priesthood officiating at the sanctuary of Dan “until the day of the captivity of the land”, i.e. in the period ushered in, both politically and ideologically, by Jeroboam's revolution, had or believed to have an ancestor named Jonathan, his identity may have some bearing on the purport of the cultic reforms launched by the former. As it is shown *supra*, before the destruction of the Northern Kingdom there was no tradition identifying Jonathan with the young Levite of Judg 17-18 (hence the obvious ambiguity of Judg 18,30b). At the same time Jonathan, the son of Gershom, never appears elsewhere in the Bible: the Mushite genealogical list in 1 Chr 23,16 has Shevuel (termed “head”, i.e. “chief”, and appearing also in 1 Chr 26,24) in his place. Eight other Jonathans are mentioned in the OT, but only one of them belonged to a priestly family — Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, from the house of Eli. Could he become the founder of the priestly dynasty of Dan and could his appearance there be connected with Jeroboam's schism⁽²⁰⁾?

Chronologically, this may be possible. Active during Absalom's revolt (cf. 2 Sam 17,17-21) and briefly appearing in the days of struggle between Solomon and Adonijah (cf. 1 Kgs 1,42-48), Jonathan was most probably born in the very beginning of the 10th century BC. At the time of Jeroboam's secession he could be, roughly speaking, sixty or seventy years old. As his father, Abiathar, was definitely dead by that time, Jonathan

⁽¹⁹⁾ *Contra* NOTH, “The Background”, 83-84.

⁽²⁰⁾ In Judg 18,30 the son of Gershom, not the son of Abiathar, is mentioned. It is possible that the latter, not connected with Dan, simply was not remembered there. In any case, the name of the clan, to which the priests of Dan belonged, was much more important for our glossator than Jonathan's patronymic, so he cited only the former. Designations of this kind are not uncommon in the OT (cf. 1 Chr 24,3). In our case it is rather crude (“son of...” instead of “from the sons of...”), but this crudeness shows only that the author of Judg 18,30b was not an able writer (as testified also by his clumsy expression *gēlōt hā'āreṣ*, lit. “expulsion of the land”).

stood a good chance of succeeding him at the head of the Elide priestly clan⁽²¹⁾. An old, venerable patriarch of a well-known and formerly influential priestly family, he had all the necessary qualifications to head a new or reformed sanctuary.

Politically, the Elides had good reasons to co-operate with Jeroboam and to support him. "Thrust out" by Solomon from the Temple and the royal court and exiled (1 Kgs 2,26-27), they were certainly not too happy with his or his heir's rule. Resenting the Zadokite domination in the cultic life of Jerusalem and being after decades of this domination beyond any hope of restoring their own high status, the Elides could hardly miss an opportunity to establish themselves at a rival shrine⁽²²⁾. Likewise, for Jeroboam his invitation of the Elides was an act of political prudence. Jeroboam's revolution succeeded under the slogan "To your tents, O Israel!" (cf. 1 Kgs 12,16-17) implying return to pre-monarchic times. As this return actually never took place, at least a symbol of the "merry old days" was badly needed. The priestly house, formerly connected with Shiloh, one of the most important pre-Temple shrines, could become such a symbol, ensuring also a measure of cultic homogeneity in Jeroboam's motley state and thus knitting its parts together.

With regard to the religious issues, the Elides could hardly have any objections to those features of Jeroboam's cult that were preserved by the Bible; in fact, Jonathan himself could prompt or even insist upon such particulars⁽²³⁾, namely:

1. Bull-iconography. It is generally believed that the deity of Shiloh was represented (or thought to be seated upon) cherubs, inherited later by the Temple of Jerusalem⁽²⁴⁾. This assumption is based solely on 1 Sam 4,4 and 2 Sam 6,2 where the Ark of Yahweh of hosts "who dwells [or: sits] upon the cherubs" is mentioned. However, in both cases this expression is not a part of a description but rather a liturgical formula, indicating that the author (or editor) lived in the time of Solomon's Temple (cf. 1 Kgs 8,6-8) but not telling anything about the iconography of Shiloh⁽²⁵⁾. On the other hand, in Judg 17-18 a *massēkā* ("molten image"), almost unanimously described by modern scholars as a bull made of precious

⁽²¹⁾ Ahimelech, the son of Abiathar, appears in 1 Chr 24,3.6 as the head of the "sons of Itamar". But this mention (on its significance see also *infra*) is most probably prompted by 1 Sam 8,17 where a scribal error or a deliberate change may be detected: see J. WELLHAUSEN, *Der Text der Bücher Samuelis* (Göttingen 1871) 177; S. R. DRIVER, *Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel* (Oxford 1913) 283; CROSS, *Canaanite Myth*, 212-214; S. OLYAN, "Zadok's Origins and the Tribal Politics of David", *JBL* 101 (1982) 177.

⁽²²⁾ For an extensive discussion of this subject see M. A. COHEN, "The Role of the Shilonite Priesthood in the United Monarchy of Ancient Israel", *HUCA* 36 (1965) 91-93.

⁽²³⁾ *Contra* HALPERN, "Levitic Participation", 38-42.

⁽²⁴⁾ So, e.g., CROSS, *Canaanite Myth*, 199; HALPERN, "Levitic Participation", 39, citing O. EISSFELDT, "Silo und Jerusalem", *Volume du Congrès Strasbourg 1956* (VTS 4; Leiden 1957) 138-143.

⁽²⁵⁾ See also S. FROLOV - V. OREL, *Men of God and Men of War* (forthcoming), commentaries to 1 Sam 4,4.

metal⁽²⁶⁾, is mentioned several times among the cultic objects made by Micah “in the days when the House of God was in Shiloh” (Judg 18,31). Even if this pericope “cannot be treated as an historically accurate piece”, being just an “Ephraimite White Paper”⁽²⁷⁾, or, *vice versa*, a hidden polemic against Jeroboam⁽²⁸⁾, it is extremely significant that his propaganda apparatus or its antagonists chose to connect the most striking and most questionable feature of the reformed cult with Shiloh, once an Elide stronghold.

2. Non-Levitic priesthood. Even the scholars who tend to deny that non-Levitic priests were actually ordained in Bethel (1 Kgs 12,31-32) sometimes have to concede that such practice was not unknown in the pre-monarchic and early monarchic periods⁽²⁹⁾. Mentions of non-Levites fulfilling cultic duties are not numerous in the last chapters of the Book of Judges and in the Books of Samuel; but all such mentions are directly or indirectly connected with Shiloh. In Judg 17,5 Micah, living or presumed to live “in the days when the House of God was in Shiloh”, ordains one of his sons while bearing in mind (as shown by v. 13) that a Levite would be a better priest. This appointment is described in a precise legal style, as a perfectly legitimate procedure⁽³⁰⁾. In 1 Sam 7,1 Eleazar, the son of Abinadab, is ordained to become the keeper of the Ark, then the most important cultic object of Shiloh. During the war with the Philistines Saul twice takes upon himself (not unlike Jeroboam in 1 Kgs 12,32-33)⁽³¹⁾ one of the main Levitic duties and privileges — offering of sacrifices (cf. 1 Sam 13,9; 14,35). For this he is sharply rebuked by Samuel (1 Sam 13,13-14) but not by Ahijah, the son of Ahitub and great-grandson of Eli: as is clear from 1 Sam 14,3.18-19, Saul’s sacrifice did not prevent Ahijah from providing his ritual assistance to the king in the course of hostilities. Finally, during David’s reign his sons were appointed priests (cf. 2 Sam 8,18), but not before the Ark was brought to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6)⁽³²⁾.

⁽²⁶⁾ See HALPERN, “Levitic Participation”, 36. This identification was clear to rabbis already in the Middle Ages: see b. San 103b with Rashi’s commentaries. Note also that the author of 2 Kgs 17,16 apparently interprets the term *massēkā* as “two calves”.

⁽²⁷⁾ HALPERN, “Levitic Participation”, 37.

⁽²⁸⁾ So AMIT, “Hidden Polemic”.

⁽²⁹⁾ See, e.g., HALPERN, “Levitic Participation”, 32, n.6. The example of Samuel in Shiloh, cited by many scholars since WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena*, 135-136, somewhat misses the point, for according to 1 Chr 6,13 Samuel belonged to a Levitic family.

⁽³⁰⁾ So AMIT, “Hidden Polemic”, 14-15.

⁽³¹⁾ In 1 Kgs 12,33-13,1 Jeroboam is depicted ascending the altar and then standing upon it “to burn incense” (*leḥaqtîr*). But see K. NIELSEN, *Incense in Ancient Israel* (VTS 38; Leiden 1986) 57. See also WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena*, 133-134.

⁽³²⁾ In order to get rid of this “awkward” remark various emendations have been proposed, see G. J. WENHAM, “Were David’s Sons Priests?”, *ZAW* 87 (1975) 79-82 and bibliography there. In my opinion, such an appointment fitted the cultic outlook of the Elide priesthood, influential in Jerusalem until Abiathar’s fall.

3. New cultic calendar. Nothing definite is known about festivals of Shiloh: the dating of the “yearly feast of Yahweh” mentioned in Judg 21,19 is not specified. However, it seems probable that Jeroboam just replaced a Judean calendar tradition by that of his own tribe, Ephraim⁽³³⁾. As calendar-keeping in the ancient world was usually entrusted to priests, the yearly cycle of Ephraim was to be identical with that of Shiloh, the main cultic centre on the territory of this tribe.

One more point of resemblance between the cult of Shiloh and that of Jeroboam’s kingdom is to be mentioned. Like Eli in 1 Sam 2,27-36, Jeroboam is confronted in 1 Kgs 13,1-3 by an anonymous “man of God”. In both cases the verbal attack is not directed against dogmas of faith; rather, certain peculiarities of ritual are denounced.

Bearing thus the stamp of the Shiloh cult of the days of Eli, Jeroboam’s religious reform may be regarded as a result of the new king’s co-operation with the Elide priesthood. But before we arrive at the conclusion that Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, not only *could*, but really *did* become the head of the cultic establishment in Jeroboam’s fledgling kingdom, two points are to be clarified.

1. The term “Shilonite” (*haššilōnī*), rather rare in the OT (seven occurrences, five of them connected with one character), is normally perceived (at least in 1 Kgs 11-15) as a synonym of “Elide”. Accordingly, the angry denunciation of Jeroboam and his cult put in 1 Kgs 14,7-12 into the mouth of this character, Ahijah the Shilonite, is regarded as a definite proof of the Elides’ opposition to the religious reform initiated by the king⁽³⁴⁾. But such a conclusion is not sufficiently founded. Neither Eli, nor any of his undoubted descendants (Ahijah, never appearing in any genealogical list or remark, may not be regarded as such) are ever termed “Shilonites” in the OT. Actually, after the Israelite defeat at Eben-ezer (1 Sam 4) we never meet them in Shiloh: according to 1 Sam 21-22, in the days of Saul the Elides resided in Nob, and later Solomon exiled Abiathar to “his field” in Anathoth (1 Kgs 2,26). Likewise, none of the Elides is referred to as a “prophet”, while Ahijah “*the prophet*” (cf. 1 Kgs 11,29; 14,2) does not seem to have had any ritual duties. All this indicates that Ahijah most probably did not belong to the priestly family of Eli’s descendants, being just an occupant of their former residence. Rather, it seems tempting to connect him with Samuel and his “ecstatic prophets” (cf. 1 Sam 10,5-12; 19,20-24); indeed, Ahijah is depicted as directly imitating Samuel in one of his two actions registered by the OT— instigation of Jeroboam’s rebellion (1 Kgs 11,29-32; cf. 1 Sam 15,27-28)⁽³⁵⁾. A group of prophets from “Shiloh B”, opposed both to the Temple establishment of Jerusalem⁽³⁶⁾ and to Jeroboam, who ruined their hopes, having turned for

⁽³³⁾ Cf. TALMON, “Divergencies”, 53-58.

⁽³⁴⁾ So, e.g., HALPERN, “Levitic Participation”, 38.

⁽³⁵⁾ It is also worth notice that in 1 Sam 1-3 Samuel is consistently depicted as a true heir of Eli in contrast to his corrupt sons.

⁽³⁶⁾ As shown by Ahijah’s reluctance to see it within the borders of the new state: cf. 1 Kgs 32,36.

support to the Elide priesthood as a living embodiment of an ancient pre-monarchic tradition⁽³⁷⁾, could produce the story of the Golden Calf in Exod 32, with the ancestor of the Jerusalem-based Aaronides building and worshipping the icon of Bethel and Dan⁽³⁸⁾.

2. If Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, was invited to the newly born Kingdom of Israel, we could expect him to choose Bethel, situated not too far from Shiloh, the native town of the Elides, as his residence. However, according to Judg 18,30 he founded a priestly dynasty in distant Dan. One explanation may be that Jonathan, being actually a defector from Judah, could not feel secure just a few miles from its border (Bethel was most probably situated 12 miles north of Jerusalem)⁽³⁹⁾. Three centuries later this calculation proved to be correct: Bethel fell into Josiah's hands, its sanctuary was destroyed and local priests brutally murdered (cf. 2 Kgs 23,15-20). Another clue may be provided by Amos 7,13 where Bethel is described as a “king's sanctuary”. It is possible that Bethel was earmarked by Jeroboam to become a “state cultic centre” employing priests from local (tribal?) shrines⁽⁴⁰⁾, with the king himself leading the service on festive occasions (cf. 1 Kgs 12,32-13,4), and thus symbolizing the unity of the state. In any case, 1 Kgs 12,30 seems to be indicative of the high esteem in which the sanctuary of Dan (a “spiritual cultic centre”?) was held: “... the people went as far as Dan, to worship before that one”⁽⁴¹⁾.

The purpose of Jeroboam's reform was to return to the original Yahwism of the Elides⁽⁴²⁾. This was the best way both to “out-archaize”

⁽³⁷⁾ Note the striking similarity of the personalities of Aaron (in the Golden Calf story) and Jeroboam: ABERBACH – SMOLAR, “Aaron, Jeroboam and the Golden Calves”, point out 13 parallels between them.

⁽³⁸⁾ Halpern is definitely right in his assertion that this pericope may belong to “an Ahijah” (“Levitic Participation” 41). But this alleged writer was not an Elide. He could rather be close to Nathan whose prophecy in 2 Sam 7,4-16 is widely believed to be originally directed against the notion of temple-building as such, i.e. against both Jerusalem and Shiloh where *hēkal*, “the temple” is mentioned in 1 Sam 1,9; 3,3. See also J. G. JANZEN, “The Character of the Calf and Its Cult in Exodus 32”, *CBQ* 52 (1990) 607.

⁽³⁹⁾ W. EWING – R. K. HARRISON, “Bethel”, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, MI 1979) I, 465.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ “In Bethel he [sc. Jeroboam] placed the priests of the high places which he had made” (1 Kgs 12,32). In 2 Kgs 23,18 “high places that were in the cities of Samaria” are mentioned. Note also my translation of *miqsôt hā'ām* (*supra*, n. 5): it may mean that the priests of Bethel were actually representatives of tribes.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Some scholars try to prove that this verse describes a unique procession that preceded the erection of the golden calf in Dan: so, e.g., DE VAUX, *The Bible*, 98-99; DEVRIES, *1 Kings*, 163. But in such a procession the people should normally follow the divine image; cf. Exod 32,1: “... the people gathered themselves together to Aaron, and said to him, ‘Up, make us gods, which shall go before us...’” *lipnē*, lit. “to the face of...” usually (though not always) denotes in the Bible a visit to a shrine: cf. M. D. FOWLER, “The Meaning of *lipnē* YHWH in the Old Testament”, *ZAW* 99 (1987) 387. See also HALPERN, “Levitic Participation”, 32, 5.

⁽⁴²⁾ The sanctuary of Shiloh was doubtlessly a Yahwistic one, at least in the days of Eli and his sons. In the story of young Samuel in Shiloh in 1 Sam 1-3 the local deity is almost invariably called Yahweh (with some exceptions, e.g., in 1 Sam 1,17 and 1 Sam 3,3). Note also the mention of a “feast of Yahweh” in Shiloh in Judg 21,19.

Jerusalem (in B. Halpern's words)⁽⁴³⁾ and to appease the sons of Joseph forming the nucleus of the newly born kingdom and still remembering the old shrine in Shiloh as a symbol of their political and spiritual independence. Thus, the period of the two kingdoms was, in the cultic sense, not just the time of the Jerusalem Temple surrounded by a constellation of minor and somewhat suspicious shrines. These two centuries may be also regarded as the "days of Shiloh", for the priesthood and cultic perceptions coming originally from that sanctuary — though not welcome for its post-Elide inhabitants — apparently dominated the state of Jeroboam and his successors⁽⁴⁴⁾. Certainly, the Deuteronomistic historians could not be happy with this new rise of the Elides in defiance of 1 Sam 2,27-36 and 1 Kgs 2,27 and did their best to avoid any mention of it (Judg 18,30b was probably not perceived as such or added later). At the same time, the list of priestly appointments in 1 Chr 24,1-6 with the Elides mentioned among the Aaronides may indicate that the descendants of Jonathan retained their influence even in exile and had to be included into the priesthood of the Second Temple.

Society for Research on
Jewish Communities
Sprinzak Building
Givat-Ram
P.O.B. 4140 Jerusalem 91041

Serge FROLOV

⁽⁴³⁾ HALPERN, "Levitic Participation", 38.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ On the role of priesthood in the Kingdom of Israel and its ties with ruling dynasties see Z. ZEVIT, "Deuteronomistic Historiography in 1 Kings 12 – 2 Kings 17 and the Reinvestiture of the Israelian Cult", *JSOT* 32 (1985) 57-78.

Psalm 82: Once Again, Gods or Men?

About fifty years ago Morgenstern⁽¹⁾ commented on this psalm: "... scarcely any psalm seems to have troubled interpreters more or to have experienced a wider range of interpretation and a more disturbing uncertainty and lack of finality therein than Psalm 82"⁽²⁾. Since then and even before the time of Morgenstern numerous researchers⁽³⁾ have grappled with Psalm 82 and there is still no real movement towards a solution. Without recounting this debate in detail⁽⁴⁾ we would remark that the *crux interpretum* of the psalm lies in determining to what אֱלֹהִים (vv. 1b.6a) refers. While one group of scholars believes that this word refers to people — in particular human judges⁽⁵⁾ — there are those who maintain that the reference here is to gods⁽⁶⁾. There is also the view that the reference in the psalm is to both

⁽¹⁾ J. MORGENSTERN, "The Mythological Background of Psalm 82", *HUCA* 14 (1939) 28-29.

⁽²⁾ In a recent publication, R.B. SALTERS, "Psalm 82,1 and the Septuagint", *ZAW* 103 (1991) 226, makes the following remark about Psalm 82: "Psalm 82 is one of the most fascinating passages in the entire Old Testament; but also one of the most complex".

⁽³⁾ Cf. H. NIEHR, "Götter oder Menschen – eine falsche Alternative. Bemerkungen zu Ps 82", *ZAW* 99 (1987) 94, footnote 3, for the important publications on Psalm 82.

⁽⁴⁾ Compare H.-W. JÜNGLING, *Der Tod der Götter. Eine Untersuchung zu Psalm 82* (SBS 38; Stuttgart 1969) 11-23; F.J. STENDEBACH, "Glaube und Ethos. Überlegungen zu Ps 82", *Freude an der Weisung des Herrn. Beiträge zur Theologie der Psalmen* (Festgabe zum 70. Geburtstag von Heinrich Groß; [Hrsg. E. HAAG – F.-L. HOSSFELD] SBB 13; Stuttgart 1986) 426-434, for the *Forschungsgeschichte* of Psalm 82.

⁽⁵⁾ For example, compare A.F. KIRKPATRICK, *The Book of Psalms* (Cambridge 1903) 494-498; R. KITTEL, *Die Psalmen* (KAT 3; Leipzig 1914) 304; E. KÖNIG, *Die Psalmen* (Gütersloh 1927) 406-409; B. DUHM, *Die Psalmen* (HKAT 14; Freiburg i. B. – Leipzig – Tübingen 1899) 211, who speak of "jüdischen Richter". E.J. KISSANE, *The Book of Psalms* (Dublin 1954) II, 57, thinks of "corrupt judges" of the pre-exilic period; H.-J. FABRY, "'Ihr alle seid Söhne des Allerhöchsten' (Ps 82,6)", *BibLeb* 15 (1974) 147, says that Psalm 82 is a pronouncement of judgment and a reference to the "kanaanäischen Beamten in Verwaltung und Rechtsprechung" in the eighth century BC. W.G. SCROGGIE, *The Psalms* (London – Glasgow 1978) 191, says that the psalm speaks of "Israelitish judges". P.J.N. SMAL, *Die Universalisme in die Psalms* (Kampen 1956) 136, also thinks of Israelite judges. A. DESSLER, *Die Psalmen* (Düsseldorf 1979) 320, says that nowhere in the prophetic books (Deissler views Psalm 82 as a prophetic judgment speech) are heavenly forces responsible for justice, hence here, we are dealing with a poetic description of earthly judges. Also compare J.P.M. VAN DER PLOEG, *Die Psalmen* (De Boeken van het Oude Testament 7b; Roermond 1974) II, 56, who shares this view.

⁽⁶⁾ For example, compare H. GUNKEL, *Die Psalmen* (GHAT 2/2; Göttingen 1926) 360-363; H. SCHMIDT, *Die Psalmen* (HAT 15; Tübingen 1934) 156; M. BUTTENWIESER, *The Psalms* (Chicago 1938) 769; G.E. WRIGHT, *The Old Testament against its Environment* (London 1951) 32; A. WEISER, *Die Psalmen. 2. Teil* (ATD 15;

gods and people and that the choice between gods and people is a false alternative⁽⁷⁾.

One of the failings of the research is that, in the attempt to solve the above-mentioned problem, insufficient attention has been given to the text of Psalm 82 itself. Psalm 82 is usually either compared with other Old Testament texts or other Old Testament texts are used to explain the psalm⁽⁸⁾. Moreover, the psalm is frequently explained in terms of a hypothetical Near Eastern *religionsgeschichtliche* background⁽⁹⁾. Sometimes

Göttingen 41955) 379-382; G. COOKE, "The Sons of (the) God(s)", *ZAW* 76 (1964) 32; H.-J. KRAUS, *Die Psalmen* 2. Teilband (BKAT 15/2; Neukirchen 31966) 570-573; S. MOWINCKEL, *Psalmenstudien I-II* (Amsterdam 1966) 66-72; S. MOWINCKEL, *Psalmenstudien III-IV* (Amsterdam 1966) 45-46; JÜNGLING, *Der Tod der Götter*, 69; J. JEREMIAS, *Kultprophetie und Gerichtsverkündigung in der späten Königszeit Israels* (WMANT 35; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1970) 122; K. BUDDE, "Brief Communications: Zu Deut. 32 43; Ps 82 6f.", *JBL* 40 (1921) 40. Cf. H.-D. PREÜB, *Verspottung fremder Religionen im Alten Testament* (BWANT 92; Stuttgart 1971) 113 and M. DAHOOD, *Psalms II* (AB 17; Garden City, NY 31986) 270, who say that this is specifically about the gods of the other nations.

(7) Morgenstern's ("The Mythological Background", 30-31) reconstruction of the psalm's process of growth gives him the opportunity to say that אֱלֹהִים in vv. 1b and 6 refers to gods while, in vv. 2-4, this word refers to human beings. NIEHR, "Götter oder Menschen", 94-98, says that it is a false alternative to choose between human beings and gods in Psalm 82 because "beide Gruppen gemeint sind" (98). According to him there is an analogy "zwischen Gott und Welt" and according to this the actions of gods and human beings are described in a parallel way. Although Niehr attempts to solve the problem, he still arrives at the conclusion (like Morgenstern) that gods are being addressed in vv. 1 and 6-7, while Canaanite officials are being addressed in vv. 2-4. To some extent, M. E. TATE, *Psalms 51-100* (Word Biblical Commentary 20; Dallas 1990) 341, also subscribes to this view of Niehr's.

(8) Texts which feature prominently in this regard are Ps 58,2; Dan 10,13.20; Isa 22,21-23; Exod 21,6. For example, compare SMAL, *Universalisme*, 136, who mentions a number of texts (Exod 18,13-17; 21,6; 22,7; Deut 1,9-18; 1 Sam 2,25; 2 Sam 14,17.20; Isa 14,12; Ezek 28,12; Zech 12,8; Ps 45,7) to prove that "gods" here refers to human beings.

(9) GUNKEL, *Psalmen*, 361, attempts to explain the psalm (particularly v. 1) in terms of the Babylonian creation epic. O. LORETZ, "Psalmenstudien III. Eine kanaanaïsche short story: Psalm 82", *UF* 3 (1971) 115, says that (as in many other OT texts) Psalm 82 is about the taking over of Canaanite traditions which underwent an *interpretatio israelitica*. In other words, what we have there is "den Rest eines alten kanaanaïschen Mythos". P. J. VAN ZIJL, "Die Interpretasie van Psalm 82 in die Lig van Nuwe Navorsing", *Ned Geref Teologiese Tydskrif* 11/2 (1970) 68-69, uses Ugaritic texts to explain the psalm and C. H. GORDON, "History of Religion in Psalm 82", *Biblical and Near Eastern Studies* (Essays in Honor of William Sanford Lasor; [ed. G. A. TUTTLE] Grand Rapids 1978) 130, also refers to certain Ugaritic parallels. R. T. O'CALLAGHAN, "A Note on the Canaanite Background of Psalm 82", *CBQ* 15 (1953) 312-313, uses the Ugaritic legend of king *Keret* as a basis for comparison to explain vv. 2-4 in particular. F. STOLZ, *Strukturen und Figuren im Kult von Jerusalem* (BZAW 118; Berlin 1970) 178, believes that Psalm 82 was originally part ("Bruckstück") of a myth because, he says, "Die Tatsache, daß einzelne Götter in direkter Rede sprechen und dazwischen Bericht der Ereignisse bzw. Kommentar folgt, ist sowohl am babylonischen wie am ugaritischen Mythenmaterial aufweisbar". W. SCHLISSKE, *Gottessöhne und Gottessohn im Alten Testament. Phasen der Entmythisierung im Alten Testament* (BWANT 97; Stuttgart 1973) 33, maintains that in Psalm 82 various Canaanite traditions have merged and

more attention is paid to the reconstruction of the putative editorial history of the text than to the text itself⁽¹⁰⁾.

Although, for obvious reasons, the reconstruction of the *Sitz* of a text is very important, it may never be done at the expense of studying the text itself. The remark of J. Jeremias⁽¹¹⁾ that, "The final form of the text has priority in every interpretation of a biblical book", applies just as equally here. Furthermore a hypothetically reconstructed historical or cultic *Sitz im Leben* may not predominate to the extent that it forces the exegesis of a text in a particular direction⁽¹²⁾. Without claiming to solve the exegetical problems of the psalm, I should nevertheless, like to attempt to add a word

have been applied to Yahweh. In contrast to this P. HÖFFKEN, "Werden und Vergehen der Götter. Ein Beitrag zur Auslegung von Psalm 82", *TZ* 39/3 (1983) 131-132, emphasises the "inner-israelitische" nature of the psalm. Although, in many respects, the psalm may be linked to Canaan, it is basically Israelite: "Der Text ist israelitisch formuliert" (132). C.J. LABUSCHAGNE, *The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament* (Pretoria Oriental Series 5; Leiden 1966) 84, also disagrees with the idea of a mythological background to the psalm.

I do not deny the presence of mythological elements in the psalm. What I do have a problem with, however, is the precise reconstruction of the *religions-geschichtliche* background of the psalm by exegetes or their linking it with specific mythologies. This hypothetically reconstructed *Sitz im Leben* then becomes the framework within which the psalm is explained and into which it is often forced. SCHLISSKE, *Gottessöhne*, 40, notices this connection: "Gerade wenn man mit einer Rekonstruktion des ganzen Mythos sehr vorsichtig sein muß und der Dichter sich kaum nach dem Befund auf einen konkreten Mythos bezieht, kann man sich des Eindrucks nicht erwehren, daß der Psalmist bewußt bestimmte mythische Motive auswählte, um sein Anliegen zu entfalten". It is however, a problem to identify the specific mythologies. H.P. Nasuti's (*Tradition History and the Psalms of Asaph* [SBL Dissertation Series 88; Atlanta 1988] 108) remark about the tradition circles of the psalm may thus be corroborated: "...its language does not appear to provide any clue as to the tradition circles in which it was at home".

(10) Some exegetes attempt (what I consider to be impossible) to reconstruct the redactional history in the minutest detail. J. MORGENSTERN, "The Mythological Background", 29-126 is a case in point. He maintains that vv. 1b, 5c and 6-7 belong to the original poem while vv. 2-5ab and 8 were added later. DUHM, *Psalmen*, 211 and W. SCHMIDT, *Königtum Gottes in Ugarit und Israel. Zur Herkunft der Königsprädikation Jahwes* (BZAW 80; Berlin 1961) 33, also do not think that v. 8 fits in here and KÖNIG, *Psalmen*, 406, believes that v. 8 was not originally part of the psalm. According to MORGENSTERN, "The Mythological Background", 119, the text has undergone a process of growth in that the original mythological nucleus "was transformed into an acceptable orthodox glorification of Yahweh and made suitable for incorporation into the official liturgy...". For criticism of Morgenstern's view, compare O'CALLAGHAN, "A Note", 314 and COOKE, "The Sons", 30-31. LORETZ, "Psalmstudien III", 114-115, considers v. 5 a gloss and v. 8 an *interpretatio israelitica*. STENDEBACH, "Glaube und Ethos", 428, agrees with Loretz in principle.

(11) "Amos 3-6: From the Oral Word to the Text", *Canon, Theology and Old Testament Interpretation*. (Essays in Honor of Brevard S. Childs; [ed. G.M. TUCKER - D.L. PETERSEN - R.W. WILSON] Philadelphia 1988) 227.

(12) Compare MOWINCKEL, *Psalmstudien I-II*, 69 and *Psalmstudien III-VI*, 46, who explains the psalm against the background of what is called the enthronement festival. H. SCHMIDT, *Psalmen*, 157, also interprets the psalm against the background of the "Thronfeste Jahwes". MORGENSTERN, "The Mythological Background", 119, speaks of the "liturgy of the New Year's Day" as background to the psalm.

of my own to the interpretation of Psalm 82 by means of a text-immanent approach in which there is particular attention to morphological, syntactic, stylistic and semantic aspects. Naturally I am not the first or only one to tackle the psalm in this manner. For instance, Jüngling⁽¹³⁾ makes a comment about Psalm 82 being "...ein Sprachkunstwerk" and that the poem is constructed "planvoll"⁽¹⁴⁾. Much more recently L.K. Handy⁽¹⁵⁾ has also analysed the psalm in detail⁽¹⁶⁾. Yet it may be necessary to examine the psalm once again in a text-immanent fashion, paying attention to morphological, syntactic, stylistic and semantic aspects and to ask whether such an approach can help to solve the problems of interpreting it. Although there are one or two proposals regarding text-critical change⁽¹⁷⁾, these do not really carry any weight and the Massoretic text may be accepted.

A scrutiny of the psalm immediately reveals the following striking word repetitions: the verb שפט is the most noticeable. It appears in vv. 1b.2,3, and again in v. 8 and could be described as a *Stichwort*. The word אֱלֹהִים ("God"/"gods") occurs in vv. 1b (twice), 6 and 8. The word רָשָׁעִים ("wicked"/"sinners") appears in vv. 2 and 4 and the word יָל in two successive stichs, that is, 3 and 4. The preposition בְּ is fairly frequent: In vv. 1b (twice), 5 and 8. The word אָרָץ is found in vv. 5 and 8 and the particle לֹא occurs in various forms and conjugations at vv. 5, 6 and 8. The particle לֵא occurs twice in the same stich (v.5) as does the comparative particle כִּי (v.7). We shall be able to explain the function of these word repetitions only after we have examined the psalm as a whole. At this stage we can do no more than comment that the striking word repetitions create cohesion in the psalm. By noting the word repetitions, we also notice the chief themes of the psalm.

Next, we shall consider the structure of the psalm. This structure can function as a verifiable framework within which to deal with the interpretation problems.

⁽¹³⁾ *Der Tod der Götter*, 104-105.

⁽¹⁴⁾ More than seventy years ago, BUDDE, "Zu Deut. 32 43; Ps 82 6f.", 41, spoke about the "Dramatik und dichterische Schönheit" of Psalm 82 and P. VAN DER LUGT, *Strofische Structuren in de Bijbels-Hebreeuse Poëzie* (Kampen 1980) 340-341 and W.G.E. WATSON, *Classical Hebrew Poetry. A Guide to its Techniques* (JSOTSS 26; Sheffield 1986) 290-293, point to the cohesion, word repetitions and figures of speech of the psalm.

⁽¹⁵⁾ L.K. HANDY, "Sounds, Words and Meaning in Psalm 82", *JSOT* 47 (1990) 51-66.

⁽¹⁶⁾ HANDY, "Sounds", 62, remarks that "Psalm 82 has been carefully constructed in several respects". Although Handy provides an excellent analysis of the psalm, the final summary (63) in which he describes the psalm as a symmetrical construction nevertheless appears rather contrived. The same could be said of Tate's (*Psalms*, 334) ABCDCBA pattern which he calls a "familiar chiasmic type literary structure" and of P. Auffret's ("Dieu juge. Étude structurelle du Psaume 82", *BN* 58 [1991] 7-12) structuralistic approach.

⁽¹⁷⁾ The idea of some (e.g. KRAUS, *Psalmen*, 569; JÜNGLING, *Der Tod der Götter*, 71; M. TSEVAT, "God and the Gods in Assembly", *HUCA* 40-41 [1970] 126; STENDEBACH, "Glaube und Ethos", 434) of replacing אֱלֹהִים in v. 1b with יְהוָה really does not hold and there are no decisive arguments to support it.

1b has a chiasmic structure:

נָצַב בְּעֵדֹת־אֵל בְּקֶרֶב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט
a b b a

Although it is not “an extra-metrical word”⁽¹⁸⁾ the word אֱלֹהִים at the beginning of v. 1b is still an *anacrusis* in terms of this chiasm. This *anacrusis* gives rise to emphasis on the word אֱלֹהִים⁽¹⁹⁾. It is not unusual in Hebrew poetry for a poem or new stanza to be introduced by an *anacrusis*.

The next three stichs (vv. 2-4) form a close, well-rounded unit based on the words רָשָׁעִים and דָּל which are joined in a chiasmic sequence⁽²⁰⁾.

רָשָׁעִים	(2)	A
דָּל	(3)	B
דָּל	(4a)	B
רָשָׁעִים	(4b)	A

The רָשָׁעִים at the beginning and the end creates an *inclusio*⁽²¹⁾. In this combination (2-4), vv. 3 and 4 are situated still closer to each other since these two stichs are built up in a parallel manner:

שְׁפֹטוּ-דָּל הָתוֹם עֲנִי וְרָשׁ הַצְדִּיקוּ
פִּלְטוּ-דָּל וְאֶבְיוֹן מִיַּד רָשָׁעִים הַצִּילוּ

Van der Lugt⁽²²⁾ correctly indicates the following similarities between the two stichs: Both are introduced by an imperative (שְׁפֹטוּ, 3; פִּלְטוּ, 4) and in any case there is alliteration between these imperatives; in both stichs the imperative is followed by דָּל. The latter word is followed in v. 3 by הָתוֹם and in v. 4 by וְאֶבְיוֹן. These constructions are obviously parallel and there are both alliteration and internal rhyme to be seen in terms of הָתוֹם and וְאֶבְיוֹן. Between וְרָשׁ (“helpless”) and רָשָׁעִים (the “wicked”) in v. 4 there is also alliteration. This alliteration serves to emphasise the contrast between the “wicked” and the “helpless”. Between הַצְדִּיקוּ (3) and הַצִּילוּ (4) there is also alliteration and assonance. The latter two imperatives, which occur at the end of the stichs, also cause end rhyme of the *û* sounds. The figure of speech of the ellipsis appears in v. 3 as well as v. 4⁽²³⁾ since the article הַ is conspicuous by its absence from the

⁽¹⁸⁾ WATSON, *Hebrew Poetry*, 110.

⁽¹⁹⁾ HANDY, “Sounds”, 55, correctly indicates the אֱלֹהִים אֵל אֱלֹהִים pattern. Emphasis is achieved by the repetition of these words. It is important to note at this early stage that אֱלֹהִים assumes two meanings: that of “God” and “gods”.

⁽²⁰⁾ Cf. WATSON, *Hebrew Poetry*, 292, who also indicates the phenomenon.

⁽²¹⁾ HANDY, “Sounds”, 55, points out that, in any case, רָשָׁעִים is preceded by “parts of the human body”, פָּנִים and יָד, both of which occur in the constructus form. This adds even more to the polish.

⁽²²⁾ *Strofische Strukturen*, 341.

⁽²³⁾ J.L. KUGEL, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry and its History* (New Haven – London 1981) 89.

nouns (compare רָל)⁽²⁴⁾. The article is normally omitted in poetry. To crown it all, both v. 3 and v. 4 have a chiasmic structure:

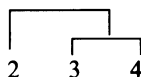
3: שְׁפֹט־דָּל וְתוֹם עֲנִי וְרֹשׁ הַצְּדִיקִי
a b b a

4: פֶּלֶט־דָּל וְאֶבְיוֹן מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצִּילֵה
a b b a

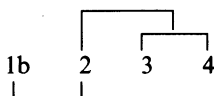
We have already seen that vv. 2,3 and 4 form a rounded unit. Besides the reasons already mentioned (see above) v. 2, like 3 and 4, has a chiasmic structure:

עַד־מָתִי תִשְׁפֹּט־עוֹל וּפְנִי רְשָׁעִים תִּשְׁאָר
a b b a

Verse 4 has the same end rhyme as vv. 2 and 3: תִּשְׁאָר, 2; הַצְּדִיקִי, 3; הַצִּילֵה, 4. Another factor common to vv. 2-4 is that the second person predominates. There is another reason why v. 2 is connected to 3 and 4: the *Leitwort* of the psalm שָׁפַט, which occurs in v. 2, is once again taken up in v. 3. All these arguments confirm the close relationship of vv. 2-4. On the basis of these arguments, the relationship among the three stichs may be represented as follows:



As will become evident in due course, v. 1b functions as an introduction to the psalm and, in conjunction with v. 8, forms a framework round the psalm. And yet there is no doubt that v. 1b is also closely related to vv. 2-4. Like 2-4, v. 1b also has a chiasmic structure (see above). Verses 1b-4 all have a 3+3 metre⁽²⁵⁾. Furthermore the verb stem שָׁפַט which appears in vv. 2 and 3, also occurs in 1b. All these arguments confirm the close cohesion of 1b-4. The relationship within 1b-4 may be represented as follows:



⁽²⁴⁾ TSEVAT, "God and the Gods", 128, footnote 14 also indicates all these things and sums them up with this remark: "This similarity in phonetics, morphology and syntax going far beyond the normal parallelism, is a noteworthy poetic element and lends weight to the exhortation".

⁽²⁵⁾ Cf. E. PODECHARD, *Le Psautier* (Lyon 1954) 72; KRAUS, *Psalmen*, 569.

Verse 5 is clearly distinguishable from the preceding. The first aspect one notices is the longer metre. One could even talk of a tristich, and describe this verse as a triple intermezzo⁽²⁶⁾. In contrast to the preceding imperatives and second person plural forms, in v. 5 we find third person plurals יִדְעוּ, יָבִינוּ, יִתְהַלְּכוּ. Yet v. 5 is not, as is sometimes claimed, a *Fremdkörper* in the psalm⁽²⁷⁾. It forms an *inclusio* with v. 8, in that the words אֶרֶץ and כָּל- which appear in v. 5, are repeated in v. 8. Of course the latter particle also appears in the form כָּלְכֶם in v. 6. Could it be coincidental that יִמוּטוּ ("they shall be shaken") in v. 5 manifests alliteration with תָּמוּתוֹן ("you shall die") in v. 7⁽²⁸⁾? Thus there are definite links between v. 5 and the following section (vv. 6-7).

On the other hand, v. 5 is not entirely detached from the preceding sections: the striking *u* sounds that appear in vv. 2-4, reappear in v. 5: יִדְעוּ, יָבִינוּ, יִתְהַלְּכוּ, יִמוּטוּ. Moreover, the change from the second person forms of address in vv. 2-4 to the third person forms in v. 5 is no reason to view this as a later addition⁽²⁹⁾.

The parallel repetition וְלֹא יָדְעוּ וְלֹא יָבִינוּ in v. 5 is the means of emphasising the powerlessness and ignorance of the אֱלֹהִים. The consequences of this are chiasmically depicted in terms of the positions of the verbs in that the verb יִתְהַלְּכוּ comes at the end of the first sentence while its parallel, יִמוּטוּ, comes at the beginning of the next⁽³⁰⁾.

בַּחֲשֵׁכָה יִתְהַלְּכוּ יִמוּטוּ כָּל-מוֹסְדֵי אֶרֶץ
b a a b

One could say that in v. 5 the parallelism and chiasms, which occur in the rest of the psalm, are combined. These elements also appear in reverse order since the first part of v. 5 shows parallelism, while this is true of the last part of the psalm (vv. 6-7); the last part of v. 5 is chiasmatic again, while this is true of the first part (vv. 1b-4) of the psalm.

These arguments confirm the fact that v. 5 is not a *Fremdkörper* in the poem, but a type of *nexus* between the preceding and following sections.

⁽²⁶⁾ VAN DER PLOEG, *Psalmen*, 58.

⁽²⁷⁾ FABRY, "Ihr alle", 142, calls it a *Fremdkörper*. LORETZ, "Psalmestudien III", 114, also calls v. 5 a *Fremdkörper* and believes that it disturbs the flow of the psalm in two ways: "Das Trikolon steht in einer Abfolge von sieben Bikola und kann nicht zur Rede der zu Gericht sitzenden Gottheit gehören". See PREUB, *Verspottung*, 114, who subscribes to the opposite view. JÜNGLING, *Der Tod der Götter*, 94, is also of the opinion that the irregularity ("Unregelmäßigkeit") of v. 5 does not indicate that it is a later addition but that it is actually a stylistic device which emphasises this verse.

⁽²⁸⁾ VAN DER LUGT, *Strofische Strukturen*, 341, actually thinks that what we are dealing with here is a deliberate alliteration.

⁽²⁹⁾ VAN ZIJL, "Die Interpretasie", 73, shows that the switch from second to third person is common in the judicial procedures of Israel.

⁽³⁰⁾ F.I. ANDERSEN, "A Short Note on Psalm 82,5", *Bib* 50 (1969) 394, makes the following correct comment on the second part of v. 5: "Poetic chiasm unifies the bicolon. The verb *yithallaku* comes at the end of the first colon; its parallel *yimmutu* comes at the beginning of the next".

Verse 6 is noticeably in the first person singular with God speaking⁽³¹⁾. The *אֲנִי-אֶמְרָתִי* is first in the sentence structure and is emphasised in this way. The rest of the stich is built up in parallel:

אֱלֹהִים אַתָּם
וּבְנֵי עֲלִיּוֹן כָּלֵכֶם

It could be mentioned that there is also end rhyme between the above-mentioned two parts of the stich (*כָּלֵכֶם*, *אַתָּם*). Verse 7 is in a strong antithetical relationship with v. 6. This is expressed by the particle *אָכֵן*⁽³²⁾. This contrast exists between *אֱלֹהִים* (= Yahweh) and the *אֱלֹהִים* (= *בָּאָדָם*). Like v. 6, v. 7 is also constructed in parallel:

בָּאָדָם תְּמוֹתוֹן
וּבְאֶחָד הַעֲשָׂרִים תִּפְלֹן

The insignificance of the *אֱלֹהִים* is emphasised by the parallelism.

Verses 6 and 7 also form a syntactic unit in that, because of *אֲנִי-אֶמְרָתִי*, these two stichs form a statement in direct speech. Those who are addressed are referred to in both stichs as "you" (plural). Handy⁽³³⁾ correctly refers to the "stream of guttural" sounds (*כָּלֵכֶם*, *אָכֵן*, *בָּאָדָם* and *בְּאֶחָד*) which connect these stichs.

As already indicated, v. 8 forms an *inclusio* with 5. By reiterating key concepts such as *אֱלֹהִים*, the verb stem *שָׁפַט*, and the preposition *בְּ* from v. 1b, 8 also forms an *inclusio*⁽³⁴⁾ with this stich⁽³⁵⁾, thus forming the conclusion and climax of the entire psalm. Verse 8 is characterised by the many *a* sounds occurring here⁽³⁶⁾.

It is evident from the discussion above that the psalm forms a cohesive whole and that no part of it can be viewed in isolation⁽³⁷⁾. The structure of

⁽³¹⁾ C. J. Labuschagne's ("Some Remarks on the Translation and Meaning of 'amarti", *New Light on some Old Testament Problems* [ed. A. H. VAN ZYL – A. VAN SELMS] [Potchefstroom 1962] 32; also see LABUSCHAGNE, *Incomparability*, 84-85 and DAHOOD, *Psalms*, 270) argument that it would be "incongruous and ridiculous in the extreme" if it were God speaking here, does not convince. Nor does the following comment by L. DELEKAT, *Asylie und Schutzorakel am Zionheiligtum. Eine Untersuchung zu den privaten Feindpsalmen* (Leiden 1967) 35: "V. 7 ist kein göttliches Urteil sondern ein überraschter Ausruf des Dichters". Irony is used in this verse to describe God's attitude towards the gods. It should also be borne in mind that, in this verse, God is described anthropomorphically as a judge.

⁽³²⁾ BUDDE, "Zu Deut. 32 43; Ps 82 6f.", 39, puts it this way: "In dem *אֲנִי אֶמְרָתִי* mit folgendem *אָכֵן* haben wir es mit einer stehenden Formel zu tun, die eine irrigte Vorstellung durch Tatsachen widerlegt und berichtigt". Budde then proceed to quote texts such as Isa 49,4; Jer 3,19ff.; Zeph 3,7; Ps 22,23 and Job 32,7ff. to substantiate his view. Also consult MORGENSTERN, "The Mythological Background", 33 and W. SCHMIDT, *Königtum Gottes*, 33, footnote 10.

⁽³³⁾ "Sounds", 59.

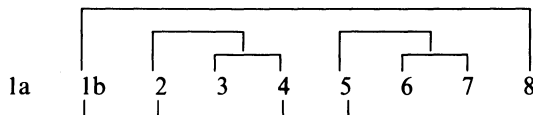
⁽³⁴⁾ VAN DER PLOEG, *Psalmen*, 57, puts it as follows: "Er is in Ps 82 inclusie; vs 1: God staat en oordeelt; 8: sta op God en oordeel".

⁽³⁵⁾ Cf. E. B. SMICK, "Mythopoetic Language in the Psalms", *WTJ* 44 (1982) 95.

⁽³⁶⁾ Cf. HANDY, "Sounds", 60.

⁽³⁷⁾ Thus, in the light of this analysis, we can hardly accept Loretz's ("Psalmstudien III", 113) view that the psalm makes no impression of unity.

the psalm could, on the basis of the preceding discussion, be set out as follows:



The question is: what effect did the poet wish to have on his audience/readers? I would sum it up as follows: by using all sorts of rhetorical aids and applying metaphorical and mythological language, the writer wishes to convince his readers of the greatness of Yahweh⁽³⁸⁾. In contrast to this the gods are shown up as nonentities and impotent beings⁽³⁹⁾.

In v. 1b Yahweh is represented anthropomorphically as judge in the midst of the "divine council". His function as judge is explained in greater detail in vv. 2-4. The irony is that God is accusing the gods of failing to fulfill their judicial function (v. 2); He admonishes them with a double imperative to let justice prevail (vv. 3-4).

In v. 5, which forms an integral part of the psalm, the gods are emphatically said to have no insight, as a consequence of which they cannot be judges. Instead of letting justice prevail, their behavior leads to total chaos. By once again allowing Yahweh to speak in the first person in vv. 6-7 the poet emphasises the point even more: irony is used to express what Yahweh "has thought"⁽⁴⁰⁾, namely that they are all gods (v. 6), but emphatic expression, by means of parallelism, is used for the statement that the gods will die "like human beings" and "like princes". This places Yahweh in sharp contrast to the "gods". If there is still any doubt as to who is being discussed here, it is thus removed by v. 7: This is about gods who are designated as mortal⁽⁴¹⁾. In contrast to this is v. 8 which harks back to v. 1 and which also forms the pinnacle of the whole psalm. The divine speech of the previous verses is replaced here by a double appeal directed to God. Because the אֱלֹהִים are powerless and incompetent to act as judges (שפט), the only true אֱלֹהִים (God) is now performing this function. The gods have plunged the whole earth (כָּל-מוֹסְדֵי אֶרֶץ) into chaos. God will rule the earth justly, because all the nations (כָּל-הָעַמִּים)

⁽³⁸⁾ Hence the inclusion of mythological elements is functional in the polemic against the gods (cf. SCHLISSKE, *Gottessöhne*, 44).

⁽³⁹⁾ PREUB, *Verspottung*, 115, gives the following competent summary of the purpose of the psalm: "Der Psalm will das Verhältnis Jahwes zu den Göttern grundsätzlich anpacken und klären..."

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Budde's ("Zu Deut. 32 43; Ps 82 6f.", 39) translation, "Ich hatte gedacht, ihr waret Götter", is therefore correct and GUNKEL, *Psalmen*, 362, agrees with Budde. However, compare with TATE, *Psalms*, 330 who disagrees with Budde.

⁽⁴¹⁾ SMICK, "Mythopoetic Language", 95, correctly notices this connection: "If then they are going to die *like* mortals, they are not mortals". JEREMIAS, "Amos 3-6", 122, says that, on the basis of Near Eastern, particularly Ugaritic, parallels and on the basis of the announcement of judgment in v. 7, the אֱלֹהִים in Psalm 82 cannot be a poetic-symbolic description of human princes or judges but that it indicates gods. Also compare KRAUS, *Psalmen*, 571. COOKE, "The Sons", 31, puts it as follows: "The statement that those who are gods shall nevertheless die like men appears to us to be an undeniable indication of the divine status of those who are so addressed..."

belong to him (v. 8). As a contrast to the gods who have fallen (תִּפְלוּ), God is called to rise up as judge (קִיּוֹם, 8)⁽⁴²⁾. He is required to restore order. Yahweh is Ruler and Judge. He alone is mighty.

Although the psalm itself gives no direct dating indications⁽⁴³⁾, which makes it difficult to date it⁽⁴⁴⁾, it should probably be read against the background of some or other time of distress⁽⁴⁵⁾ during which the poet had to deliver an apology to convince his listeners that God was the only true God⁽⁴⁶⁾. Thus, in this respect, the psalm must have had a comforting effect on the people of God⁽⁴⁷⁾.

Department of Old Testament
Faculty of Theology
University of Pretoria
Pretoria, 0002, South Africa

W. S. PRINSLOO

⁽⁴²⁾ Compare PREUB, *Verspottung*, 113, who rightly indicates this contrast.

⁽⁴³⁾ Not even the heading of the psalm gives us any indication of the time of its origin. Although, from the Chronistic literature (cf. Ezra 2,41; 2 Chr 29,30), Asaph was known as the head of a guild of singers, the heading could be a later liturgical addition which does not provide information about the original historic *Sitz im Leben*.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ The divergent attempts at dating the psalm testify to this: VAN ZIJL, "Die Interpretasie", 77, says that the verbs and their shades of meaning clearly indicate the premonarchic period or a time preceding the history of David. J. S. ACKERMAN, "An Exegetical Study of Psalm 82", *HTR* 59 (1966) 439, also subscribes to this opinion and DAHOOD *Psalms*, 269, agrees with him. KRAUS, *Psalmen*, 570, believes that the psalm is pre-exilic and is probably very old. NIEHR, "Götter oder Menschen", 97, harks back to the social criticism of the eighth century BC. PREUB, *Verspottung*, 115, agrees with LABUSCHAGNE, *Incomparability*, 85, by seeing Psalm 82 as preparation for the reform of Josiah, and HANDY, "Sounds", 63, footnote 1, also supports this dating. STENDEBACH, "Glaube und Ethos", 436, says that Psalm 82 represents a stage of the *Religionsgeschichte* before the time of monotheism in Deutero-Isaiah. Consequently he also places the psalm in the seventh century before the reform of Josiah. JÜNGLING, *Der Tod der Götter*, 80, gives a number of reasons why the psalm should be dated in the time of Deutero-Isaiah or shortly afterwards. HÖFFKEN, "Werden und Vergehen", 138, also places the psalm in the exilic/postexilic period. MORGENSTERN, "The Mythological Background", 121, places the "original" section of the psalm (according to him vv. 1b, 5c and 6-7) at approximately 500 BC, while he places the "final step in the editorial process" (119) in the third century BC.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ H. BIRKELAND, *Die Feinde des Individuums in der israelitischen Psalliteratur*. Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der semitischen Literatur- und Religionsgeschichte (Oslo 1939) 49, says that it is clear "... daß die Not, die vorausgesetzt wird, realiter in den heidnischen Oberherren ihren Grund hat". However, the certainty of being heard ("Gewissheit der Erhörung") is, according to Birkeland, the dominating concern in the psalm.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ JÜNGLING, *Der Tod der Götter*, 78, correctly sums up the purpose of the message of the psalm as follows: "Jahwe ist der einzige wahre Gott".

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Without conceding to Mowinkel that the psalm should be interpreted against the background of what is known as the enthronement feast, he actually makes a competent summary of the function of the psalm (*Psalmenstudien III-VI*, 46): "Für die Gemeinde enthält somit das Orakel dieses Psalms eine tröstliche und erhebliche Zusage Gottes". SCHLISSKE, *Gottessöhne*, 44-45, gives the following correct formulation: "Das Ende der Götter ist gekommen. In dieser Gewißheit findet der angefochtene Glaube Trost. Gibt es auch andere göttliche Mächte, Herrscher ist allein Jahwe".

The Purpose of Luke's Divorce Text (16,18)

In recent years there has been a number of hypotheses about how Luke 16,18 fits into Luke's thought developing since 16,15(14)⁽¹⁾. The very multiplicity of suggestions indicates a certain continuing degree of unrest about this matter⁽²⁾. Thus, a new suggestion does not contend with a "majority opinion" in this matter⁽³⁾ and can enjoy a fuller freedom of enquiry.

(¹) A most popular interpretation seems based on the perception of Luke's intention to maintain the pertinence of the Law and the Prophets, while admitting that the Law and the Prophets must be re-phrased to reflect Jesus's understanding. Thus, v. 18 is in a certain sense needed to correct v. 17. I. H. MARSHALL, *The Gospel of Luke* (Exeter 1978) 631: "...the saying is included by Luke at this point in order to illustrate the continuing validity of the Law but in the new form given it by Jesus"; J. NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18:34* (WBC 35B; Dallas 1993) 8,22: "The present verse is meant to be illustrative of the way in which the demands of the kingdom of God take up and confirm the imperatives of the law and the prophets (Exod 20:14; Lev 18:20; Deut 5:18; Mal 2:14-16), but go on to be yet more demanding in very specific ways". "The third saying [v. 18] shews by an illustration how the Gospel reaches above and beyond the Law", T. MANSON, *The Gospel of Luke* (London 1930) 188. E. KLOSTERMANN, *Das Lukasevangelium* (HzNT; Tübingen 1975) 167: "Bestätigendes Beispiel dafür dass das neue Evangelium das alte Gesetz nicht aufhebt, sondern erfüllt". A different and more recent suggestion finds the logic of vv. 14-18 in the combination of problems they raise. W. GRUNDMANN, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (THzNT 3; Berlin ²1961) 324 links two elements, money and divorce/re-marriage: "Bei der von den Pharisäer geübten und durch ihre Scheidungspraxis ermöglichten 'sukzessiven Polygamie (Schlatter 552)' hat die Geldfrage grosse Bedeutung gehabt". Similarly, J. DERRETT, "Dives and Lazarus and the Preceding Sayings", *NTS* 7 (1961) 370: "The point of v. 18 is that even where the rabbis have consistently misled the public [by misinterpreting Deuteronomy regarding re-marriage] the Law will be fulfilled, equally with cases (e.g. usury)..." A slightly divergent view, relating v. 15 ('justice') to v. 18 is that of K. RENGSTORF, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (Göttingen 1958) 192-193: "Jedenfalls ist hier ein Punkt, an dem die Pharisäer unausweichlich unter Gottes verdammendes Urteil treten, weil sie beide völliger formalen Korrektheit Gottes reinen und heiligen Willen ihrem unreinen Herzen dienstbar machen". Finally, L. JOHNSON, *The Gospel of Luke* (SP 3; Collegeville 1991) 255 sees the logic of vv. 14-18 in the combination of three elements: "Idolatry, money and divorce are joined [in the Old Testament] by the term *bdelygma* [v. 15]". This kind of combination is confirmed again at Qumran in the *Damascus Rule* CD 4,14-5,10. It is *bdelygma*, therefore, which provides the reason why v. 18 is joined to what precedes it.

(²) "The real problem is determining how Luke sees this [v. 18] as a statement concerning the perdurance of 'law', JOHNSON, *Gospel*, 251; later, 254, "it [v. 18] pops up in the text without any motivation".

(³) "...it is still puzzling why it [v. 18] has been introduced into this part of his travel account", J. FITZMYER, *The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV* (AB 28A; New York 1985) 1121. Within the framework of 16,1-31, the following authors suggest their own divisions of the text: MARSHALL, *Gospel, Table of Contents*: 1-9; 10-13; 14-15; 16-17; 18; 19-31; JOHNSON, *Gospel*, vii: 1-13; 14-31; M.-J. LAGRANGE, *Évangile selon Saint Luc* (Paris 1948) 440: 14-18; NOLLAND, *Luke*, 821: 16-18; FITZMYER, *Gospel*, xiv: 14-15; 16,17; 18.

The interpretation I wish to offer regarding the relationship of v. 18 to what precedes it is simply this, that Luke intends this verse to be understood figuratively, along the lines of parable. Put negatively, he is not here teaching about divorce. Rather, he is speaking about a lesson to be learned from the irrevocability of marriage.

Luke's initial concern, which begins at v. 14 with the pejorative description of the Pharisees as "avaricious"⁽⁴⁾, leads Jesus to begin his response to these Pharisees at the level of justification: "You are those justifying yourselves". Eventually an instrument of justification is mentioned, i.e., Jesus turns to the validity of the Law and the Prophets in the process of justification. To emphasize the enduring value of the Law and Prophets, Jesus cites the case of marriage: another, acknowledged value which endures 'to the end of this age'⁽⁵⁾. This brief run-through of vv. 14-18 clearly needs further discussion, and this will be done after a few other considerations.

That v. 18 is to be understood as a figurative, not literal, statement, is not in every respect a new idea⁽⁶⁾, nor an accepted one. One reads in, e.g., B. Easton that "[B.] W[eiß], J1 [Jülicher] treat the saying [v. 18] as an allegory that resembles Rom 7:1-4. J1 takes it as anti-Pharisaic; the Law and the Gospel are as inseparable as husband and wife, so that to despise the Gospel is to despise the Law... Weiss is simpler. He thinks the allegory is a warning to Judaizing Christians; to forsake the Gospel for the Law is to commit spiritual adultery"⁽⁷⁾. And indeed, Easton is not the only one to

⁽⁴⁾ "fond of money, avaricious": *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, trans and adapt. by W. ARNDT and F. GINGRICH (Chicago 41952) 866.

⁽⁵⁾ Cf. Luke 20,27-38, particularly Jesus's remark: "The children of this age marry and are given in marriage, but those deemed worthy of that (next) age and of the resurrection from the dead — they will not marry nor be given in marriage" (vv. 34-35).

⁽⁶⁾ G. L. HAHN, *Das Evangelium des Lucas* (Breslau 1894) II, 349: "Alle, welche willkürlich den in ihm [Gesetz] ausgesprochenen Gotteswillen ausser Acht setzen und sich der Welt und ihren Gütern hingeben, wie ihr selbst, Ehebrecher sind, d.h. von Gott Abgefallenen. Jesus spricht den Gedanken, den er im Sinne hat, bildlich aus, indem er von der Betrachtung ausgehend, dass das Verhältniss des Israeliten zu Gott einer mit ihm geschlossenen Ehe gleiche, sagt: Ihr, die ihr euch der Welt hingegeben habt, habt die Ehe mit Gott gebrochen"; later, B. WEISS, *Die Evangelien des Markus und Lukas* (MeyerHK 1,2; Göttingen 1901) 547-548, took a decisive step: "Wenn nun Lk in diesem Zusammenhang den Anspruch Mt 5,32 verflucht, so kann derselbe schwerlich ein blosses *Beispiel* für die dauernde Giltigkeit... oder gar für die Verschärfung des Gesetzes durch Jesus... sein..., sondern Lk wird, den Spruch *allegorisch* fassend (vgl. z. 17,31, denselben auf das Verhältniss zum Gesetz und zu neuen Ordnung des Gottesreiches angewandt haben (vgl. Röm 7,1-3). Wer um der letzteren willen sich von dem ersten scheidet, begeht vor Gott ebenso die Sünde des Ehebruchs, wie der, welcher, nachdem Gott das Gesetz durch die Verkündigung des Gottesreiches abgelöst, das alte Verhältniss mit jenem fortsetzen und so eine Abgeschiedene heirathen will. Jener sündigt gegen V. 17, dieser gegen V. 16". Finally, A. JÜLICHER, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu* (Tübingen 1910) 633, notes: "Natürlicher... ist die allegorische Deutung des Wortes [v.18] auf das Verhältniss von Gesetz und Evangelium".

⁽⁷⁾ B. EASTON, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (Edinburgh 1926) 248. Easton finds the first formulation (essentially that of Jülicher) "distinctly forced" (248), but does not outrightly deny the possibility of allegory here: "The literal sense of this verse to Lk was naturally not destroyed by any allegory he saw in it" (249).

object to what these scholars proposed; many years ago M.-J. Lagrange offered strong objections against them⁽⁶⁾. Nonetheless, I propose here again the hypothesis that v. 18 serves as a figure, but distinguish myself from past proponents of this interpretation on two scores: first, they saw in this verse a crystalization of a struggle between Judaism and Christianity, as Weiss and Jülicher suggested — I do not want to go as far as such an allegorization; secondly, they offered little or no literary justification for their interpretation — and that I do, now. There are a number of observations of a literary nature which recommend this kind of interpretation.

Three Literary-Critical Considerations

1. Luke 12,58-59 serves as a good example of what I find in v. 18. In these verses Jesus speaks of “settling with” one’s accuser: “When you are going with your opponent to appear before a magistrate, try to settle with him on the way lest he turn you over to the judge, and the judge deliver you up to the jailer, and the jailer throw you into prison. I warn you, you will not be released from there until you have paid the last penny”. The relation of this image to its prior verses, 54-57, which urge one to interpret the time correctly, is not, to the ordinary reader or listener, immediately

⁽⁶⁾ Cf. LAGRANGE, *Évangile*, 440-441. “Mais l’allégorie supposerait incontestée l’indissolubilité du mariage, et l’on sait que la loi permettait la répudiation de la femme. D’ailleurs l’allégorie serait plus que bizarre. Dieu a pu se comparer à un époux par rapport à la nation israélite; la métaphore était devenue courante; rien ne préparait à l’alliance du *nomos* avec la *basileia*. D’après B. Weiss, celui qui se sépare de la Loi pour s’unir à l’Évangile commet un adultère, et aussi bien celui qui s’en tiendrait à l’ancienne loi seule après que Dieu l’a remplacée. — Un Juif n’eût pu comprendre cette bizarre comparaison. S’il répudiait la Loi, il ne commettait pas d’adultère en s’unissant à une loi nouvelle. Et comment comprendre l’hypothèse d’une femme répudiée par un autre que son mari?” While I would agree with Lagrange to say that earlier authors carried the figurative language of v. 18 too far, I still argue in this essay that the intent of v. 18 is figurative, not, as Lagrange concludes, “Il semble donc que le cas de la répudiation vient ici comme un exemple du principe posé” (441). This conclusion he offers brings us back to his first objection. There he argues the allegory presupposes that marriage is indissoluble in Jewish society, and it was not so in fact. If that is the case, then why would this verse be an “example” of the “principe posé”? The answer would have to be that, even if other Jews did not understand marriage to be indissoluble, Jesus did, and it is Jesus who is using his own way of looking at things here for his purpose, not the way of looking at things of most Jews. Where this point has impact on what I propose is in this, that Jesus usually used figures that were agreed upon by his audience as the “way things are”. We cannot assume that they agree with him in this matter of divorce and remarriage. Should we say that v. 18 can be unusual because we have lost the original context which would have bound Jesus with his audience, and because the author has taken it out of its original context (and found it in Q? attached to v. 17 somehow?)? However, it is *not always true* that Jesus uses imagery with which his audience agrees; the impact of the Good Samaritan relies essentially on the fact that his audience is at best reluctant to think of a Samaritan as more sympathetic than a priest or levite. Thus, in the case of the figurative usage of v. 18, though it is unusual, it is not impossible at all as a manner of Jesus’s speaking to his Jewish audiences. Cf. also KLOSTERMANN, *Lukasevangelium*, 167: [The theories of Jülicher and Weiss] liegt nicht so nahe [to the meaning of v. 18].”

clear. Luke has helped a bit in clarifying the relationship with the addition of "for" (v. 58). This conjunctive shows that vv. 58-59 somehow are a reason why you can "judge for yourselves what is right"⁽⁹⁾. But if one remains on the literal level here, there is no hope that vv. 58-59 will clarify v. 57 and vv. 54-56, to which v. 57 itself refers. Only if one understands that these verses 58-59 are not concerned to teach about the worldly wisdom of settling with one's accuser, only if the audience can apply the point of the parable to its own situation about which Jesus does teach — only then will one understand how vv. 58-59 function in support of what Jesus suggests in vv. 54-57. That is, if it is clear what a person should do to avoid jail and the "not getting out till you have paid the last penny", it should be clear what one should do in the urgent moment of the kingdom, before it is too late.

But, even after this explanation, and this is my point, one looks back to see if there is anything in vv. 58-59 that suggest figurative analogy, any signal I missed which would stop me from reading the text literally as a teaching about avoiding jail. There is nothing there, except the scrap that appears as the enigmatic "for". One needs a change of mental/imaginative approach towards this description in vv. 58-59, a questioning which goes beyond literal understanding, in order to arrive at the proper meaning of the verses. Without a sign to signal this need, it falls to the verses themselves to work in me the manouever whereby I see meaning in these verses which is figurative, not literal. While lacking a positive signal to indicate that they are to be interpreted figuratively, their very being insists that they cannot be understood as literal.

The puzzlement, contained in a communication of the kind we have in vv. 58-59, is removed when Jesus introduces a figure by the term "parable" or, even when that term is missing, by such a formula as "there once was a man/woman who...". These introductory formulas are clear signals to the reader that some analogy is now to be proposed which is congruent with Jesus's thematic point; the reader is alerted. But in vv. 58-59 it is left to the reader to make the mental adjustment, without benefit of a formula, that we are now on the level of figure which can contribute to Jesus's theme of the moment.

The point here is that Luke uses such figurative manouever in Chapter 12 in his Gospel; thus, it is not unreasonable to look for this mannerism here in 16,18.

2. Not only are signals missing in our v. 18, but, akin to what was said under point number 1 is the fact that the matter of v. 18 has nothing to do with its precedents, it is notably alone; there is nothing that has prepared for its entrance onto the scene, nothing to introduce such a statement as it contains⁽¹⁰⁾.

⁽⁹⁾ Translation of M. ZERWICK — M. GROSVENOR, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (Rome ²1974) 235.

⁽¹⁰⁾ The way scholars have had to phrase their description of v. 18 supports my contention that the argument which results in v. 18 is missing; cf. A. LEANEY, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (London ²1966) 225: "For a fuller account [my emphasis] of the Lord's teaching on divorce, see Mark X. 2-12 (cf. Matt. XIX. 3-12)...".

This is not to deny that there have been attempts to show how, in its literal sense, v. 18 relates to something mentioned before it⁽¹¹⁾. But these suggestions are, on the one hand, often quite subtle, even strained, and are, on the other hand, judged by other exegetes to be at best only possible. My point is that the movement into v. 18 should be smoother than it is if v. 18 remains interpreted literally, and that an interpretation which struggles so hard to show the coherence of this verse with its precedents is a likely indicator that we have here a verse which was meant to be understood in some other way than in its literal sense.

An example of this occurs at Luke 11,33-36. What precedes is concerned with "a sign from heaven"; in essence one is looking here to the credibility of Jesus. This is no introduction, on the literal level, to subsequent remarks about what one does with a lighted lamp. Even the eventual exhortation to make sure "the light in you is not darkness" (v. 35) does not explain why Jesus has switched topics, from his own credibility to light and lamp. Jesus depends on the mind of the listener to adjust itself to the figurative level; it is only here, as every listener must sooner or later realize, that vv. 33-36 make sense in their context. In short, there is nothing preceding vv. 33-36 which leads into talk of "light"; the verses stand alone, and this very factor suggests the possibility of figurative, rather than literal meaning.

3. A further factor to consider about 16,18 is its very formulation. While one can discuss its likeness/stage of development with regard to other formulas dealing with marriage/divorce (i.e., Matt 5,32; 19,9; Mark 10,11-12; 1 Cor 7,10-11), the formula itself in v. 18 suggest maturity of expression, as though it had reached the point in tradition where it could be abstracted from its normal context and used as a self-contained *quasi* proverb. At the same time, it seems most likely that its proper context would be, not what we have in vv. (14)15-17, but something akin to what we find in Matt 19,1-12; Mark 10,1-12; clearly this argumentation is missing, and just as clearly vv. 14-17 are not v. 18's natural context⁽¹²⁾.

For these various reasons, then, it seems proper to think of v. 18 as a verse which serves its context on the level of figure rather than on the level of the literal. A final argument comes from a consideration of context.

The Coherence of Vv. 14-18

The logic or coherence of vv. 14-18 must be teased out; perhaps the hypothesis that these verses were not originally spoken together⁽¹³⁾ might explain some of the difficulty regarding their present coherence — but only some.

⁽¹¹⁾ For some theories, cf. note 1; it would also be helpful to consult S. WILSON, *Luke and the Law* (SNTSMS 50; Cambridge 1983) 43-51 for a review of literature up to the time of his writing regarding vv. 16-18.

⁽¹²⁾ "The topic of divorce is introduced abruptly and leads no further", J. CREED, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (London 1965) 206.

⁽¹³⁾ CREED, *Gospel*, 206: "The arrangement [vv. 14-18] is probably editorial". "Der Themenwechsel (Besitz-Gesetz) lässt vermuten dass Logien unterschiedlicher

V. 14: The Lucan introduction to these verses, i.e., v. 14, concerns avariciousness; it is a subject to which both the preceding story of the manager *tês adikias* and the subsequent story of the rich man contribute⁽¹⁴⁾. Given this orientation from context, also vv. 15-18 are most likely meant to address this problem.

V. 15: Verse 15 speaks of the self-evaluation of the Pharisees (they consider themselves "just") and of the opposite evaluation by God, who knows their hearts and who considers certain human values contemptible⁽¹⁵⁾. In the light of v. 14, it seems right to say the following about v. 15:

1. that the Pharisees consider themselves just *while* holding their view about money; perhaps they also think their having money suggests that God favors them, that their money is a proof that they are just⁽¹⁶⁾;

2. that what their hearts reveal about money shows that they are not just, but contemptible — an obviously subjective statement of condemnation, which corresponds to the view of Jesus that they are avaricious.

What is at stake, then, is judgment about justice before God: the Pharisees with their money think they are just; Jesus judges their hearts to be evil in this matter.

V. 16: The logical connection between this verse and the preceding seems to be multiple.

First, however, the verse itself is, within itself, concerned to draw a distinction between the time of the Law and the Prophets and the time of the announcement of the kingdom. In itself, this distinction between 'then' and 'now' is not made because of some direct relationship with v. 15. Put

Herkunft durch die Hand des Redaktors miteinander verknüpft worden sind", J. ERNST, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (RNT; Regensburg 1977) 469. EASTON, *Gospel*, 249, notes: "The extraordinary combination of these two verses [17-18] in Lk is most naturally explained as a reminiscence of their fairly close connection in Q". MARSHALL, *Gospel*, 631, notes: "To be sure the change of subject to divorce is strange, but if Luke was following Q, this may well have been the next most suitable saying in that source". J. WEISS, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments* (Göttingen 1907) I, 487: "...die drei Unzusammenhängenden Sprüche aus Q...".

(14) Various authors show various relationships between vv. 14-18 and their contexts. H. CONZELMANN, *Die Mitte der Zeit* (BzHT 17; Tübingen 1977) 103 notes: "Die Lukanische Interpretation zu den beiden Pointen [in 16, 19-31; Conzelmann here refers to the division of vv. 19-31 into two points by Bultmann, as noted by Conzelmann (103, n. 3)], liegt in V. 14f. einerseits, V. 16-18 andererseits vor. Das Gleichnis liegt in der Linie zeitlos-ethischer Anwendung der Jenseitsvorstellung, die gut zu Lukas passt". EASTON, *Gospel*, 246, refers to "14-18. Preface to the story of Dives and Lazarus", then goes on to note: "As there is no break in [ch 16] v. 1, 'all these things' must include the anti-Pharisaic matter in ch 15 also; yet 'lovers of money' refers only to vv. 1-13 of the present chapter [16], causing a certain obscurity". F. BOVON, *Luc le théologien* (Genève 1988) 413 notes: "Luc 16,1-31 contient un résumé de l'éthique à l'intention des responsables".

(15) "Der Angriff Jesu richtet sich gegen die pharisäische 'Selbstgerechtigkeit' ..., die in krassem Widerspruch zu der Gesinnung des Herzens steht", ERNST, *Evangelium*, 469.

(16) "Because the Pharisees...regarded riches as the rightful reward for faithful observance of the Law...", N. GELDENHUYS, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (NICNT: Grand Rapids 1951) 420.

in its briefest and simplified form, the time of the Law and the Prophets, while a time of salvation, needed completion, and thus is not the time of the urgent announcement of the kingdom.

But, once v. 16 is made to follow upon v. 15, a new perspective is opened up. First, if v. 15 spoke of 'justifying yourselves', the mention in the next verse of the Law and the Prophets suggests the means which, if obeyed, lead to the judgment that one is 'just'. Secondly, presence of the kingdom, which has resulted in the fact that *pas eis autên biadsetai*⁽¹⁷⁾, suggests, at least in the author's overall perspective, the need for repentance. The verse is not of itself a direct call (imperative voice) to repentance, to repent of that 'heart which God knows' (v. 15), but, in the light of the judgment just made upon the Pharisees, it suggests that the time of urgency is now here. Moreover, it is hard to concede that, in a charged atmosphere such as we have indicated with v. 14, Luke (or Jesus) would be interested in simply noting, for its own sake, a change of the times.

But — there is the possibility of a wrong understanding here. To emphasize the urgency of repentance now, the speaker indicates a difference from the past which, while it too looked always to repentance, was not characterized as final. Indeed, with this introduction of the "last days" (Acts 2,17), the emphasis is on the urgent need for repentance now — but one might be tempted to think the distinction between moments also suggests the end of the validity of the Law and the Prophets in the justifying process, in favor of some new means adapted to the newness of the 'kingdom' situation⁽¹⁸⁾.

V. 17: That it is easier to change heaven than a *serif* on a Hebrew letter is, in itself, an interesting observation. But in the light of v. 16⁽¹⁹⁾, it

⁽¹⁷⁾ "...here (as in Mt 11:12) it is disputed whether this force is to be understood as hostile or praiseworthy", ZERWICK-GROSVENOR, *Analysis*, 247. It is possible that the text can mean that "everyone is pushing his way in according to his own norms of acting". However, in the context of the Gospel it seems to grant the Pharisees too much; it suggests that they believe the announcement, from John and from Jesus, that the Kingdom is at hand — which belief the rest of the Gospel argues against. For various suggested interpretations of *biadsetai*, cf., e.g., E. ELLIS, *The Gospel of Luke* (NCBC; Grand Rapids 1974) 203; CONZELMANN, *Mitte*, 103, n.2: "Der Zusammenhang entscheidet wohl auch über den Sinn von *biadsethai* (im positiven Sinn — gegen den ursprünglichen!)". M. GOULDER, *Luke — A New Paradigm*, vol. 2 (JSNTSS 20; Sheffield 1989) gives a brief bibliography regarding the interpretation of *biadsetai*; Goulder himself (633) notes with approval: "Frederick Danker, *JBL* [77] (1958): 'In all the parallels cited by Weinstein of *biadsetai* followed by *eis*, hostile intent is expressed' (234) ...and none of the references given by G. Shrenk (*TDNT* I, pp. 609-614) modify this judgment".

⁽¹⁸⁾ Actually, there is something new, *vis-à-vis* the Jewish Scriptures, added to the justification process: faith in Jesus. There is no other name given to people under heaven by which they can be saved but that name (Acts 4,12). "In no way does he distinguish between us and them, since he cleanses their hearts by faith" (Acts 15,9). So often it is said that "your faith has saved you" (Luke 7,50; 8,48; 17,19; 18,42). It is important to add, however, that not to mention the necessity of faith in Jesus, while mentioning the continued necessity of the Law and the Prophets in the justification process, cannot be construed to mean that faith in Jesus is not necessary for justification.

⁽¹⁹⁾ "v. 17 supplements v. 16", EASTON, *Gospel*, 247.

seems that Luke (Jesus) wants to forestall any suggestion that the new moment regarding justification means that the Law and the Prophets, the traditional means of justification, have been cancelled in favor of some other means.

This has the effect, within vv. 15-17, of saying that the Pharisees' belief in their justification must continue to measure up to the norms so long in existence, i.e., the Law and Prophets⁽²⁰⁾. Indeed, v. 17 makes sure that justification, which is the backdrop to the more immediate accusation of avariciousness and the need for repentance, remains in the consciousness of the reader. There is no abandonment of the Law and Prophets in favor of something else occasioned by the arrival of the kingdom and its anxious urging to repentance.

V. 18: At this point Luke calls attention to the indissolubility of marriage: divorce of one's wife and marriage to another is adultery, and marriage to another already married and divorced is also adultery⁽²¹⁾. Why bring this matter up here? As noted earlier, there is no preparation for this subject-matter, and the statement has the quality of what is a conclusion to an argument, with the argument left out⁽²²⁾. Indeed, it seems to be a well-fashioned, free-floating saying. As such, it is usable in both the literal and figurative senses.

I suggest that it is a succinct summary of much of the teaching of Jesus about marriage/divorce; not quite the quality of a proverb, it briefly shows the evil of marriage to a person already married, even though divorced. Its value lies not only in identifying what is displeasing to God, but in its affirmation of the divine intent regarding marriage. But this affirmation can have effects on another level. Where marriage and divorce are no longer literal, but now figurative terms, one can use the saying to show the value of anything that is not to be changed⁽²³⁾.

⁽²⁰⁾ "The words of the Law, if rightly understood, were the sure guide to salvation", EASTON, *Gospel*, 249.

⁽²¹⁾ While the sentence is not all-embracing (it does not decide the state of the person who puts off his wife, but does not marry another), it does cover both sides of an essential matter: it speaks of the divorcer re-marrying, and of the marrying of a divorced person. "Mt's wording [5,32] is certainly artificial, for he attributes to divorce something [adultery] that belongs to remarriage", EASTON, *Gospel*, 250.

⁽²²⁾ CREED, *Gospel*, 206, offers what to me is a doubtful interpretation of Luke's intention: "It [v.18] is introduced as a striking instance of conflict between the teaching of Jesus and the Jewish Law. Therefore it is set side by side with the assertion of the permanence of the law in order to affirm the paradoxical claim that law is at once ended and in force".

⁽²³⁾ "Als ein Beispiel für das neue Gesetzesverständnis führt Lk das absolute Verbot der Ehescheidung an, das sich von der im Judentum geübten Praxis... durch seinen Rigorismus abhebt", ERNST, *Evangelium*, 471; further, this author is in agreement with P. HOFFMANN, *Studien zur Theologie der Logienquelle* (NTA NF 8; Münster 1972) 55: "Das Thema mit der Besitzparänese in einem inneren Zusammenhang steht".

An Objection

A potential objection lies in the fact that the saying of v. 18 does not speak about simply "leaving" one's partner, but of leaving and marrying another — there is the sin. This suggests that the point of comparison between the figure in v. 18 and what precedes should be not the indissolubilities of marriage and of the Law and the Prophets, but the leaving them and associating oneself with "another", in this case Christianity.

But this objection seems untenable. First, because it does not make sense of the second half of v. 18 which speaks of the sin of marrying someone already divorced. Perhaps one might see in the first half someone already divorced. Perhaps one might see in the first half of v. 18 a movement away from the Law and the Prophets towards "another", but to what can the second half of the verse refer? The Law and the Prophets cannot be the woman divorced, nor can Christianity; it makes no sense to say that "marriage to either one of them, once put off by another, is wrong" (24).

Secondly, and more to the point, in each case mentioned in v. 18 the sinfulness of the remarriage is based on the indissolubility of the first marriage. The point of the saying is not finally to identify sin, but to emphasize, to insist upon and to give motive for perseverance in the marriage bond. Certainly, both Matthew 20 and Mark 10 argue this way. Paul, by his very conservative stance in 1 Cor 7, shows that he is willing to tamper with the indissolubility of marriage only in an extreme situation which affects nothing less than the peace of the Christian party. Even though the teaching in v. 18 underlines the sinfulness of marrying a divorced person, that very teaching is meant to emphasize something else, that is the indissolubility of marriage.

Thus, once again it seems right to see in v. 18 the affirmation of an "institution" which cannot be dissolved. It is this element which offers itself, in what was originally a free-floating statement, as an example of the indissolubility that characterizes the Law and Prophets.

I repeat that v. 18 is not teaching about marriage/divorce; certainly it is not accusing the Pharisees of guilt in this matter, nor even challenging them on the theoretical question: is divorce for any reason permissible. Since the entire context has to do with the desire for wealth and justification, a stray consideration of divorce/remarriage — unexpectedly introduced and immediately abandoned — seems illogical; it should be not treated other than as a support, in some way, to the general theme which preoccupies Jesus at this moment.

(24) Nor can it be that "the one married, divorced and now remarried and causing sin" is a non-Christian, pagan philosophy. Nor can it be that this "remarried one" stands for a return to something other than Christianity after one has become a Christian. For in v. 18 the evil in the remarriage is based on the goodness of the first marriage, and one would not want to grant that the first "marriage to something pagan" was good.

Conclusion

The coherence of vv. 14-18, then, revolves around the perceived need that the Pharisees repent of their avariciousness. This repentance is urgent, for the patience of God associated with the time of the Law and the Prophets yields to the present moment: announcement about the Kingdom and the effect of that announcement, i.e. all are to enter. The formulation regarding the new moment accentuates the urgency of the present time: the present *is* different from the past. But in anticipation that the formulation also might suggest that the Law and the Prophets are no longer in effect, this notion is corrected by v. 17 and sustained by the indissolubility-of-marriage figure in v. 18, a teaching already known as a presumption of Jesus.

The primary goal of vv. 14-18 is to put to the Pharisees the call to repent; what is in their hearts is an abomination to God. But the residual effect of these verses is the affirmation that the guide to repentance is, as always, the Law and the Prophets. Indeed, the following story about a rich man will argue that it is by "hearing Moses and the Prophets" that the rich man's brothers will avoid "this place of torment" (16,28-29). Within this context, v. 18, as a recognized example of indissolubility, supports the centrality of the Law and the Prophets as key guide to "the deeds befitting repentance" (Acts 26,20)⁽²⁵⁾.

Pontifical Biblical Institute
Via della Pilotta, 25
I-00187 Rome

John J. KILGALLEN, SJ

⁽²⁵⁾ Nothing in the teaching of Jesus, as presented by Luke, contradicts or undermines or lessens the value of the teaching of the Law and the Prophets. The miracles done on the Sabbath represent from Jesus's point of view, not disobedience to the law regarding the sanctity of the Sabbath, but obedience to it. Jesus's weeping over the Temple and his expectation of its destruction are in the prophetic mode, an acceptable one in Israel's tradition, and were not to be construed as opposition to the concept of Temple and sacrifice, but as call to and hope for timely repentance. And if eventually Christianity did not find the Law of Clean and Unclean valid anymore, this, according to Luke, was not a teaching of Jesus, but a revelation from God (cf. Acts 10,1-11,18). Generally speaking, Jesus in Luke is presented as opposed to interpretations of the Law and the Prophets (e.g., the Sadducees, regarding life after death [20,27-38]), not to the Law (rightfully interpreted) itself.

RES BIBLIOGRAPHICAE

Altsyrische Götter und Rituale aus Emar⁽¹⁾

“Emar now represents a major new source for understanding early Syrian religion, a supplement and a balance to the data from Ugarit. The diverse collection reveals a cult and culture that is distinctly West Semitic but not Canaanite, and the site thus contributes to a more nuanced picture of Syrian culture and religion”. Dieser Satz aus der *Introduction* des neuen Buches von D. E. Fleming über Götter und Riten aus Emar stellt nicht nur die kultur- und religionsgeschichtliche Bedeutung des Fundes von Tontafel-Tempelarchiven im nordsyrischen Emar aus der Zeit kurz vor seinem Untergang Anfang des 12. Jh.s fest, sondern beschreibt implizite gleichzeitig die Aufgabe, deren sich D.F. bei der Abfassung seiner Studie unterzogen hat. Diese ist aus einer Arbeit mit gleichem Titel hervorgegangen, die 1990 an der Harvard University als Dissertation vorgelegen hatte. Vorneweg sei D.F. und seinen Lehrern, hier vor allem W.L. Moran, Dank für seine bahnbrechenden Forschungen in Sachen altsyrischer Philologie, Kultur- und Religionsgeschichte an dem bislang nur schlecht erschlossenen Textmaterial aus Emar gesagt.

Das Buch setzt sich inhaltlich, wie schon aus seinem Titel hervorgeht, aus zwei Teilen zusammen, die D.F. formal in sechs Abschnitte unterteilt: Nach einer I. *Introduction* (1-7) behandelt er im ersten Teil (9-198) das Einsetzungsritual der Hohenpriesterin des Baal, Text Emar 369, und gliedert ihn in die Abschnitte II. *Text, notes, and translation* (9-59) und III. *The NIN.DINGIR Installation (Emar 369): Commentary* (61-198); im zweiten Teil (199-289) versucht D.F. eine sachliche Einordnung des Einsetzungsrituals der Hohenpriesterin in das gesamte, bislang erfaßbare Kultgeschehen Emars in Abschnitt IV. *The Emar festival tradition: patterns and development* (199-277) und stellt in Abschnitt V. *Cultural affinities: preliminary observations* (279-289) darüberhinaus Verbindungslinien zu den kultisch-religiösen Bräuchen der Nachbarn fest — in diesem zweiten Teil erfüllt sich der Untertitel des Buches *A Window on Ancient Syrian Religion*. Der Schlußabschnitt VI. *Conclusion* (291-293) spiegelt diese Zweiteilung der Arbeit wider. Mit dem *Appendix: Rites for the dead at Emar* (295-301), der den Text Emar 452 vorstellt, beendet D.F. seine religionsgeschichtlichen Untersuchungen und schließt das Buch mit einer *Bibliography* (303-320) und *Indices: A. Accadian/syllabic words* (321-325), *B. Sumerian Logograms* (326-328), *C. Gods* (329-330), *D. Emar Texts* (331-348) ab.

⁽¹⁾ Daniel E. Fleming, *The Installation of Baal's High Priestess at Emar. A Window on Ancient Syrian Religion* (Harvard Semitic Studies 42). Atlanta, GA, Scholars Press, 1992. XVI-348 S.

I. Zum ersten Teil (Abschnitte II und III, 9-198)

D.F. führt den Wortlaut der fünf(?) verschiedenen Texte in einem *expanded text, with all manuscripts presented side by side* (9) an. Die dadurch erstellte Synopse ermöglicht ihm aufzuzeigen, an welchen Stellen die Texte in ihren erhaltenen Partien Übereinstimmungen oder Abweichungen enthalten. In Kapitel B. *Notes to the Text* (30-48) greift er dann die Differenzen auf und bespricht sie, indem er gleichzeitig seine Kollationsergebnisse an den Originalen in Aleppo mitteilt und seine zumeist aus der Kollation gewonnenen Einsichten erörtert, die gegen meine Bearbeitung in *UF* 21 (1989) 47-100, stehen. Von den zahlreichen, jedoch nicht immer einleuchtenden Ergebnissen sei eines hervorgehoben: Die Lesung des Gottesnamens *Šaḥri* anstelle der von mir in A 24, 52 (mit Parallelen) und 92 als *Ša-a'/aḥ-ri-ri* gebotenen ist auf der Stelle überzeugend.

Im Anschluß an die Rechtfertigung des von ihm erarbeiteten Ritualtextes unterbreitet D.F. unter dem Punkt C. *Translation* (48-59) eine Übersetzung nach Zeilen und bietet dort eine abweichende Übersetzung an, wo die Texte dies nahelegen. So gewissenhaft die Methode auch sein mag: Es stört den Leser erheblich, wenn D.F. im englischen Kontext alle Wörter unübersetzt läßt, die einer Diskussion im Kommentar bedürfen. Denn Sätze wie "They will offer before ^aIM one sheep, one *qu'û-jar*, (and) one *ḥizzibu* of wine" (Z. 4), oder "The officials who give the *qidašu*, the *ḥussu-men*", ... (Z. 11-12) müssen für einen Nichtfachmann doch abschreckend wirken, wenn er sich bei der Lektüre nicht die Mühe macht, aus dem dezidierten Kommentar (Abschnitt III, 61-198) die relevanten Wörter und Stellen herauszusuchen und die ihm vorliegende Übersetzung mit Handeintragungen zu ergänzen.

Über diese allgemeinen Bemerkungen hinaus möchte ich hinsichtlich der 1. Texttradition, 2. Wahl einer Entu-Kandidatin, 3. des Anlasses zur Einsetzung einer neuen Entu, 4. der zeitlichen Erstreckung des Einsetzungsrituals und 5. einzelner Wörtern konkret einiges zu bedenken geben.

1. *Texttradition*

D.F. stellt einleitend zu Punkt B. *Notes to the Text* auf S. 30 fest: "All NIN.DINGIR ritual manuscripts appear to consist of instructions for a single rite, not multiple installation traditions. Real variation in the events described is limited, and the wording is strongly fixed. Most differences involve single words, parts of words, or spelling". Wenn man sich die auch von ihm gebotene Synopse der Texte vor Augen hält, dann kann man sich seiner Schlußfolgerung kaum anschließen. Hätte er sich die Mühe gemacht,

(?) Erfreulich ist, daß es D.F. gelungen ist (5.9), zu den vier von D. Arnaud und mir für die Rekonstruktion des Rituals erfaßten Texte A (Msk. 731027 + 74245), B (Msk. 731042), C (Msk. 74286a) und D (Msk. 731061 + 74274) einen bruchstückhaften fünften anzuschließen: E = EMAR VI/3 Nr. 402 (Msk. 74286c: EMAR VI/2, S. 598), der Reste der Zeilen 14-20 von Text A bietet.

die auch von ihm verzeichneten Differenzen auf ihre philologische und traditionsgeschichtliche Aussagekraft hin zu untersuchen, dann wäre er sicher zu einem anderen Resultat gekommen und hätte meine Folgerungen, zumal im Blick auf verschiedene Ritualbegehungen (UF 21 [1989] 74-76), besser verstanden. So jedenfalls hat D.F. die Probleme der Mehrfachbezeugung eines Rituals nicht erkannt und folglich versäumt, die damit zusammenhängenden Folgerungen zu erfassen: Eine Mehrfachbezeugung ist nicht der Ausdruck verschiedener Riten, sondern drückt in Sinne der "Einmaligkeit jeder 'Vorführung' bei prinzipieller Wiederholbarkeit" ⁽³⁾ mit ihren Nuancierungen allenfalls verschiedene Anlässe zur Durchführung eines und desselben Rituals aus. Dieses dürfte den Priestern und Ritualmeistern vertraut gewesen sein, ihnen vielleicht sogar als autorisierte Vorlage schriftlich fixiert vorgelegen haben. Es versteht sich, daß sich dann bei Aktualisierungen in ihrem schriftlichen Niederschlag einerseits formale Besonderheiten der jeweiligen Schreiber wie Schriftduktus und Ausdrucksweisen nachweisen lassen, andererseits aber auch tiefergreifende Änderungen wie Wechsel von Ritualteilnehmern und Kulthandlungen auftreten. Da diese Phänomene in allen vier (fünf) Texten des Einsetzungsrituals der Entu begegnen, haben wir es bei ihnen unzweifelhaft jeweils mit einer Neubegehung desselben Rituals zu tun.

Mit dem Ergebnis, daß in den vorliegenden Texten jeweils eine Neubegehung bezeugt ist, stellt sich die Frage nach ihrem jeweiligen Anlaß.

2. Wahl einer Entu-Kandidatin

D.F. formuliert auf S. 175: "The selection of the NIN.DINGIR consists of two rites, identification by means of the purû and anointing by pouring oil on her head". Dem widerspricht er selbst, indem er S. 176 E. Sollberger ⁽⁴⁾ zitiert: "Sollberger says that OB year names show that EN-priestesses were designated by extispicy, but no animal appears to be involved in the selection of the Emar NIN.DINGIR". Die letzte Feststellung, daß bei der Wahl einer Entu in Emar kein Tier im Gespräch sei, übersieht offensichtlich die Schlußbemerkung von Text A, Z. 91.93: "Wenn die Entu irgendwann später stirbt, wird man 1 Rind (und) 1 Schaf im Tempel schlachten... Das Schaf wird er (:der Opferschau priester) öffnen". Dies besagt nichts anderes, als daß in Emar wie auch sonst im Alten Orient eine schicksalhafte Festlegung offiziellen Charakters mittels der Eingeweideschau geschieht. Angedeutet ist dieser Vorgang auch in Z. 2 von Text A: "Die Tochter eines bestimmten Einwohners von Emar wird bestätigt werden", weil nur die Eingeweideschau eine Wahl dieser Bedeutung bestätigen kann. Die Becherwahrung mit Öl spielt, ungeachtet der diesbezüglichen Ausführungen von D.F., in Entscheidungen der Öffentlichkeit keine Rolle. Wenn in A 2 das Wort *pûru* begegnet, dann handelt es sich bei ihm um ein

⁽³⁾ H. CANKI – H. MOHR, *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe* (Stuttgart 1988) I, 127.

⁽⁴⁾ Siehe auch J. RINGER, ZA 58 (1967) 139.

Behältnis⁽⁵⁾ für Öl, mit dem die Entu-Kandidatin nach ihrer Bestätigung gesalbt, geweiht und vor ihrer Gottheit eingeführt wird.

Die Einleitung zum Ritual (A 1-3) ist durch D.F. also vollends falsch verstanden und übersetzt worden.

3. *Anlaß zur Einsetzung einer neuen Entu*

Zunächst ist festzuhalten, daß eine Entu-Priesterin nicht, wie D. Arnaud annimmt, eine Amtsdauer von einem Jahr hatte und dann einer Nachfolgerin Platz machte. Als Gegenargument führt D.F. an, daß das Einsetzungsritual dann doch wohl Bestandteil des Festkalenders von Emar geworden wäre. Seine Folgerung lautet (65): "Lacking any reference to the external calendar, it is natural to conclude that the festival is occasional rather than regular, and the expected occasion would be the death of the previous priestess". Während D.F. bei seinem ersten Schluß zuzustimmen ist, daß es sich bei dem Einsetzungsritual nicht um ein regelmäßiges, also etwa um ein jährlich wiederkehrendes Fest handelt, erscheint der Folgeschluß, daß dieses Gelegenheitsfest auf dem Tod der amtierenden Priesterin beruhen müsse, voreilig.

In den Texten A–D werden die jeweiligen Ritualteilnehmer mehrfach aufgeführt und erfüllen während des Ritualablaufs eine eigenständige Rolle. Wie die tabellarische Auflistung in *UF* 21 (1989) 74 verdeutlicht, sind die Teilnehmer in den vier Texten keineswegs identisch — übrigens ist dies eines der klarsten Hinweise darauf, daß es sich bei den Texten um den schriftlichen Niederschlag jeweils einer gesonderten Begehung desselben Rituals handelt —: So tritt der "König von Šatappu" nur in Text A auf und spielt in den Texten B, C und D keine Rolle und begegnet die "Frühere Entu" in den Texten A, B und C und wird in Text D nicht bedacht. Aus dieser Verteilung der Ritualteilnehmer ist zu schließen: Der "König von Šatappu" ist mit dem Ritual normalerweise nicht befaßt und wurde in Text A wohl nur deswegen berücksichtigt, weil die einzuführende Entu dieses Textes aus seiner Stadt als Partnerstadt von Emar stammte; die "Frühere Entu" zählt normalerweise zu den Teilnehmern und wird lediglich in der Begehung, die dem Text D zugrundeliegt, nicht genannt — der Grund dafür bedarf der Erörterung.

In *UF* 21 (1989) 75 habe ich aus dem Fehlen der "Früheren Entu" in Text D geschlossen, daß sie nicht mehr am Leben war und folglich am Ritual zur Einführung ihrer Nachfolgerin nicht teilnehmen konnte. Dabei ging ich davon aus, daß *māhirītu* "frühere" hier nicht, wie es die Semantik des Wortes durchaus zuließe, die "vorangegangene, verschiedene", also nicht mehr unter den Lebenden befindliche, meint, sondern die "(im Amt) vorangegangene, Amtsvorgängerin", die noch am Leben ist und der Einführung ihrer Nachfolgerin beiwohnen kann. Wenn D.F. als Alternative zur Ansetzung eines jährlichen und damit eines an den Festkalender anschließbaren Einsetzungsfestes nur die sieht, daß das Fest

⁽⁵⁾ Siehe *AHw* 881: *pūru* I "(Stein-)Schale"; es ist kaum vorstellbar, daß hier *pūru* II "Los" (*AHw* 881-882) gemeint ist.

unregelmäßig, und zwar nur in Verbindung mit dem Tod einer amtierenden Entu stattfand, dann hat er sich doch wohl einen allzu engen Rahmen gesetzt und unterschätzt die Bedeutung der einzelnen Texte für die Erschließung sich wiederholender Kultbegehungen. Denn es ist durchaus bekannt, daß es auch andere Gründe als den Tod für die Einsetzung einer neuen Entu gab: etwa politische oder alters- und gesundheitsbedingte, die die Amtsträgerin daran hinderten, ihr Amt erwartungsgemäß auszufüllen⁽⁶⁾.

Dem Hinweis von D.F. (65-66): "In the context of ancient Near Eastern religion, death should not be perceived as an absolute barrier to participation in the affairs of the living..." ist grundsätzlich zuzustimmen, wirkt in diesem Zusammenhang aber kaum überzeugend, weil es sich hier nicht um einen Text aus dem Totenkult handelt, sondern um den eines Einsetzungsrituals.

4. Die zeitliche Erstreckung des Einsetzungsrituals

Hinsichtlich der zeitlichen Erstreckung des Festrituals stellt D.F. fest, daß es "approximately nine days" (63) gedauert habe. Zu diesem Ergebnis sei er aufgrund der Neulesungen von Ziffern gelangt, die an entsprechenden Stellen des Rituals den Festtag festlegen. Wie er aber selbst zugibt, sei es nicht leicht, genaue Angaben dazu zu machen, zumal die Texte Differenzen aufwiesen (63-65).

Ausgehend von Z. 83 (58), die den Text *For the seven days, the ^uHAL and the singers will get one dinner-loaf (and) one jar of barley-beer each* bietet, ist aber zu fragen, ob das Fest, das *in globo* durchaus neun Tage in Anspruch nehmen konnte, sich im Kern nicht doch nur über sieben Tage erstreckt hat. Um zu einem Konsens zwischen den unterschiedlichen Angaben der Texte zu gelangen, braucht in diesem Fall ja nur angenommen zu werden, daß der Tag der Wahl einer neuen Entu und der Tag des Ausklangs, an dem die Verteilung der Opfergaben geschah, außen vorstehen. Daraus resultiert eine Festwoche mit sieben Tagen, die mit der Tonsur der Entu-Kandidatin beginnt und mit deren Überführung aus dem elterlichen Haus in den Tempel endet.

Bei einer derartigen Verteilung der Tage und der damit verbundenen Feststellung einer Festwoche von sieben Tagen läge das Fest des Einsetzungsrituals im Rahmen der anderen Emar-Feste, für die D.F. einen Sieben-Tage-Rhythmus festgestellt hat.

5. Einzelbemerkungen

Im Hinblick auf die vielen Schwierigkeiten, die das Einsetzungsritual mit seinem z.T. ungewöhnlichen und bislang nicht erfaßten Vokabular bietet, könnten zu allerlei Wörtern und Ausdrücken Bemerkungen gemacht werden. Im folgenden soll eine Auswahl von fünf aufzeigen, daß die Diskussion noch weitergeführt werden muß.

(6) Siehe z.B. J. RINGER, ZA 58 (1967) 117, 120 – mit weiterer Literatur.

a. Nomina der Formation *pirās*

D.F. bespricht S. 94-96 das Nomen *qidašu* und beläßt es, versehen mit der resignierenden Feststellung "The group which appears most often in the NIN.DINGIR festival is the most difficult to identify" (94), unübersetzt. Formal ist klar, daß wir es bei dem Substantiv mit einer nominalen Ableitung der (westsem.) Wurzel QDŠ "heilig sein, etc." (?) zu tun haben. Da es gemäß Kontext Leute charakterisiert, die für die Durchführung von Riten verantwortlich sind, dürfte es ein Abstraktum sein: "Leute des *qidašu*".

Wie die Recherchen von D.F. ergeben haben, finden sich in den Kulttexten aus Emar weitere Nomina der Formation, wie sie dem *qidašu* zugrundeliegt: *imaru* "song" (189,296), *kibadu* "..." (258) und *nikaru* "foreigner" (258) (°).

Unter den im Akkadischen belegten Nominalbildungen finden sich zwar Formationen wie *piras* (GAG § 55 g 7) und *pirās* (GAG § 55 j 12), die auf die Emar-Wörter anwendbar wären, sie erscheinen aber, da sie Konkreta bezeichnen, für die Bedeutungsansetzung der angegebenen Wörter ungeeignet; sie gehören eher zu den Abstrakta. Besser paßt hier die von C. Brockelmann für das Arabische aufgeführte Formation *pirās* (GVG § 133 c) als Nebenformation von *parās* (GVG § 131 c), die außer Infinitiven vor allem auch Abstrakta kennzeichnet.

Danach sind für die Emar-Wörter folgende Übersetzungsvorschläge zu machen: *kibādu* "Ehrung", *qidāšu* "Weihe(handlung)", *nikāru* "Feindschaft" (°), *zimāru* "Gesang".

b. *tadnatu* "Übergabe"

D.F. bietet für den zweiten Abschnitt von A 48 auf S. 54 eine Teilübersetzung ("On the third day of the datnātu-festival of the NIN.DINGIR, the nugagtu will give forth [her] cry") und bemerkt zu den Schlüsselwörtern 'datnātu' und *nugagtu*, sie seien ein "obscure term" (63) bzw. "some kind of lamentation priestess" (104). Hinsichtlich *nugagtu* verstehe ich seine Zurückhaltung, weil wir von der Dame kaum mehr wissen, als daß sie zu den Klagefrauen gehört. Bei 'datnātu' möchte ich aber an meiner Analyse und Deutung (UF 21 [1989] 82, Anm. 78) des *tadnatu* als *parsat*-Bildung⁽¹⁰⁾ von ass. *tadānu* festhalten und nochmals betonen, daß ich, entgegen dem Verständnis von D.F., die Entu hier nicht als Handelnde, die Geschenke bringt, sehe, sondern als Objekt der Handlung, die während des Festes vollzogen wird: die "Schenkungs-Übergabe" der Entu an den Tempel — in der Verbindung EZEN *tā-ad-na-ti ša* NIN.DINGIR wird NIN.DINGIR im Gen.obj. angeschlossen.

(°) Im Akk. ist die Wurzel schlecht belegt: *qadāšu* "rein werden, sein" (AHw 891), "to be free of claims(?)", *quddušu* "to clean; to make ritually clean, to purify" (CAD Q 46-47).

(°) Ob das von D.F. in diesem Zusammenhang (259) genannte *ki-pa-ú* als topographischer Begriff auch hierher gehört, ist unsicher.

(°) Bereits D.F. vergleicht *nikāru* mit dem in Māri belegten *ni/ukurtu* "hostility" (259).

(10) Zu den Abstracta dieses Nominaltyps siehe GAG § 55b.

c. *kubādu* “(Zeremonie der) Ehrung, (Lob-)Gottesdienst”

Weil der Begriff *kubādu* in dem Ritual eine zentrale Rolle spielt, hat sich D.F. um seine Erfassung besonders bemüht: 2. *The kubadu, Presentation of the Sacrifice* (162-169). Zum Abschluß stellt er verallgemeinernd fest, daß es einen Akt beschreibe, der einer Opfer- oder Schenkungshandlung seitens der Ritualteilnehmer vorangehe (169). Diese Differenzierung erscheint allzu gekünstelt. Denn alle Stellen belegen, daß *kubādu* nicht nur die Handlung zu Ehren einer Gottheit einleitet, sondern diese selbst begleitet, also einen ehrenden Akt darstellt. Von daher legt es sich nahe, *kubādu* mit “Gottesdienst” zu übersetzen, der zu Ehren der Gottheit geschieht. Dieser Deutung kommt auch der Nominaltyp *purās(t)* (siehe GAG §56 k 15) entgegen, der substantivierte Adjektive und numinöse Ausdrücke zumal des Gebets bildet.

Wenn D.F. konstatiert, daß “the kubadu (is) not a known Akkadian word” (162) sei, dann scheint er *kubādu* unverständlicherweise nicht mit dem aus dem 1. Jahrtausend bekannten *kubāt/du* “Ehrung” (AHw 497a), “honors” (CAD K 482a) zusammenbringen zu wollen.

Ein dem *kubādu* verwandter Begriff ist, um noch einen herauszugreifen, *qutāru*. Die Wörterbücher übersetzen ihn mit “Räuchermittel, Räucherung” (AHw 930b) und “fumigant” (CAD Q 321-322), sehen in ihm also in erster Linie ein Naturprodukt, das während eines (Reinigungs-)Rituals als Räucherwerk benützt wurde. Daß diese Deutung des Wortes *qutāru* aber einseitig ist, beweist die Existenz einer Beschwörungsserie, die *qutāru* heißt⁽¹¹⁾. In dieser Serie sind Beschwörungen zusammengefaßt, die zu einem Räucheropfer ausgesprochen werden. Demnach beschreibt der Begriff *qutāru* nicht nur die Begleiterscheinung einer Beschwörung, sondern auch den Inhalt derselben und ist am besten mit “Räucheropfer-Beschwörung” wiederzugeben⁽¹²⁾.

d. *tappātu* “Gemeinschaft, Helferstellung; Gesellschaft” (AHw 1322)

Am Tag der Übersiedlung der künftigen Entu aus dem Elternhaus in den Tempel wird ihr nach Z. 61-62 wie einer Braut eine Schärpe ums Haupt gelegt und, weil ihr dadurch die Sicht genommen ist, von Freundinnen umschlungen, zum Ziel geführt. Der Text verwendet für den hier (A 62/D 5) mit “Freundin, Gefährtin” wiedergegebenen Begriff *tappātu*, das er mit *Mi* determiniert und, weil es sich um zwei Begleiterinnen, für jede Seite eine, handelt, in den Dual gesetzt: *mi-ta-ap-pu-ta-ši* “ihre beiden Freundinnen, Gefährtinnen”.

⁽¹¹⁾ Siehe I. L. FINKEL, “Muššu’u, Qutāru, and the Scribe Tanittu-Bēl”, *Velles Paraules, Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honor of Miguel Civil on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (ed. P. MICHALOWSKI, u.a.) *Aula Orientalis* 9 (Sabadell 1991) 103-104.

⁽¹²⁾ In dieser Hinsicht entspricht der babylonischen *qutāru*-Beschwörung voll und ganz die hurro-ugaritische Weihrauchopfer-Beschwörung, siehe M. DIETRICH – W. MAYER, “Die hurritischen Weihrauchopfer-Beschwörungen aus Ugarit”, *UF* 26 (1994).

D.F. übersetzt den Ausdruck mit "her two maids" und kommentiert unter Verweis auf *tappāu* (AHw 1321) auf S. 188: "The noun *tappātu* occurs at Mari and Amarna...; the *u*-vowel in the NIN.DINGIR text is unexpected". Wenn er zur Erklärung des Ausdrucks *mi-ta-ap-pu-ta-ši* von *tappātu* "Genossin, Gefährtin; Nebenfrau" ausgeht, ist der *a/u*-Wechsel in der Tat kaum erklärlich. Der Ausdruck läßt sich jedoch unproblematisch deuten, wenn er, wie in *UF* 21 (1989) 94, Glossar, vorgeschlagen, das Abstraktum *tappātu* "Gemeinschaft, Helferstellung; Gesellschaft" zugrundelegt und dieses mit dem Determinativ *Mf* zur Bezeichnung einer Einzelperson aus der mit dem Abstraktum angesprochenen Gruppe erweitert: "eine Angehörige der Gemeinschaft" > "Freundin, Gefährtin".

II. Zum zweiten Teil (Abschnitte IV und V, 199-289)

Nachdem D.F. im ersten Teil dem Titel seiner Abhandlung "The Installation of Baal's High Priestess at Emar" nachgegangen ist, erfüllt er im zweiten Teil die Ankündigung seines Untertitels: "A Window on Ancient Syrian Religion". Dabei gibt er sich Mühe, das Einsetzungsritual nicht nur in einen übergreifenden kultischen Rahmen der Stadt Emar einzuordnen, sondern auch in einen übergreifend altsyrischen. Um dies tun zu können, war er genötigt, alle Daten, die wir über den Kult Altsyriens im ausgehenden 2. Jt. v.Chr. kennen, detailliert zu erfassen und in einen Gesamtkonnex zu stellen. Das vielseitige Material, das er hierfür zusammengetragen hat, ist durchaus geeignet, Standardwerke wie "Syrien. Die Mythologie der Ugariter und Phönizier" von M.H. Pope, W. Röllig⁽¹³⁾ und "Die Religionen Altsyriens" von H. Gese⁽¹⁴⁾ mit den neuesten Forschungsergebnissen zu ergänzen.

D.F. weiß es selbst am besten, daß er mit der Arbeit, die er für diesen Teil der Abhandlung — zumal innerhalb einer Dissertation — leisten mußte, nicht zur Zufriedenheit aller beitragen konnte. Denn er schreibt S. 200: "The discussion which follows is not offered as a definitive statement, but rather is intended to introduce a body of data and interpretation that will contribute to continuing work on an intriguing site". So danken wir ihm, daß er die Diskussion schon selbst beispielsweise mit dem Artikel "Baal and Dagan in Ancient Syria"⁽¹⁵⁾ vorangetrieben hat.

Wenn ich nachfolgend auf einige Punkte in diesem zweiten Teil der Abhandlung zu sprechen komme, dann tue ich das, um einen Beitrag zu der von ihm gewünschten Diskussion zu liefern.

⁽¹³⁾ *Wörterbuch der Mythologie* (Hrsg. H.W. HAUSSIG) 1. Abteilung: Die Kulturvölker, Bd. 1: Götter und Mythen im Vorderen Orient (Stuttgart 1965) 217-312 + 8 Tafeln.

⁽¹⁴⁾ H. GESE, "Die Religionen Altsyriens, Altarabiens und der Mandäer", H. GESE – M. HÖFNER – K. RUDOLPH, *Die Religionen der Menschheit* 10/2 (Stuttgart 1970) 1-232.

⁽¹⁵⁾ *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie* (ZA) 82/1 (Berlin – New York 1993) 88-98.

1. Hurriter in Nordsyrien

In 4. *Emar Deities in Light of Known Syrian Pantheons* (207-209) nimmt D.F. auf die Fundorte von Ebla, Māri, Ḥattuša, Ugarit und Alalāḥ Bezug und rekapituliert u.a. die Bedeutung der dort entdeckten Archive für die religionsgeschichtliche Einordnung des Pantheons von Emar. Dabei kommt er in besonderem Maße auf die Rolle der Hurriter in diesem Raum zu sprechen. Es fällt auf, daß er seine Überlegungen hierzu fast ausschließlich auf das vor 12 Jahren erschienene Werk von G. Wilhelm, *Grundzüge der Geschichte und Kultur der Hurriter* (Darmstadt 1982) aufbaut, das keineswegs mehr den Anforderungen des heutigen Wissenstandes gerecht wird. Die bedeutenden Funde der letzten Jahre haben es nämlich notwendig gemacht, das Bild der Hurriter und des Hurritischen in Kleinasien und Nordsyrien neu zu zeichnen und ihre Rolle in der Literatur und Religion Altsyriens in vielen Punkten neu, vielfach vielleicht erstmalig, zu definieren; die folgenden Bemerkungen beziehen sich auch auf die Ausführungen von D.F. im Abschnitt *Teššub and the Hurrian Pantheon* (225-227): Sätze wie “Ebla predates Hurrian influence in Syria” (208) und “Most of the festival gods that are shared by the Hurrian pantheon probably were worshipped in pre-Hurrian Syria” (227), die nach Maßgabe der bis heute bekannt gewordenen Texte von einer vor-hurritischen Zeit Syriens ausgehen, wirken wie Prämissen, die ihre Tragfähigkeit noch unter Beweis stellen müssen. Denn sie fußen auf einem Geschichtsbild über die Ausbreitung der Hurriter, das sporadischen Zeugnissen abgerungen und z.T. recht fragwürdig ist. Nicht unumstritten ist beispielsweise ein von diesen Prämissen abgeleitetes Resultat für die Religion, daß das hurritische Pantheon in einen östlichen (Arrapha, Nuzi, etc.) und einen westlichen (Syrien, Kleinasien, etc.) Götterkreis zu unterteilen ist.

Die Feststellung “the Hurrian portion is stronger at Alalāḥ than at nearby Ugarit” (209) stützt sich — ohne statistischen Rückhalt — auf die Namengebung und läßt die literarischen Produkte hurritischer Priester und ihrer Gemeinde in Ugarit, zu denen Opfertexte, Beschwörungen, Hymnen und Gebete in der ugaritischen Keilalphabetschrift gehören, außer Betracht. Daß dies keine tragfähige Diskussionsbasis ist, braucht nicht betont zu werden⁽¹⁶⁾.

Erst die noch ausstehende Veröffentlichung der hurritischen Texte aus Emar wird zeigen, welche Sonderstellung das Pantheon von Emar — gleichgültig, ob dessen Gottheiten einen syrischen, sumero-babylonischen, kleinasiatischen oder hurritischen Namen tragen — einnimmt.

2. Das kissû-Fest

Außer den Installationsriten für die Addu/Baʿal-Priesterin Entu und die Aštart-Priesterin *mašartu* spielten in Emar die *zuku-* und *kissû-Feste*

⁽¹⁶⁾ Zum einzelnen siehe M. DIETRICH – W. MAYER, “Die Sprache und Kultur der Hurriter in Ugarit”, *Ugarit – ein ostmediterranes Kulturzentrum im Alten Orient, Ergebnisse und Perspektiven* (Hrsg. M. DIETRICH – O. LORETZ) *Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palästinas* 7 (Münster 1995).

eine bedeutende Rolle, wie die verhältnismäßig große Anzahl von Textbezeugungen zeigt. D.F. widmet sich diesen beiden Festen ausführlich: zunächst dem in Emar selber beheimateten Sieben-Tage-zukru-Fest (C. *The zukru Festival*, 229-255), dann dem *kissû*-Fest, das seinen Ausgangspunkt offensichtlich in dem Emar benachbarten Šatappi hatte (D. *The kissu-Festivals*, 255-263).

Um zu einer Deutung des *kissû*-Festes zu kommen, das einzelne Götter zu Ehren bringt, erörtert D.F. die Möglichkeit, das Wort *kissu* über die Brücke eines *i/u*-Wechsels an das Akkadische *kussû* "Stuhl, Thron" anzuschließen. Daraus folgert er: "The kissu set at Šatappi would have begun as enthronement rites for the major deities of the town; each consisting mainly of offerings for the god honored in the individual festival" (259). Diese Feststellung legt nahe, daß das *kissû*-Fest ein wiederkehrendes, ein kalendarisch verankertes Fest war, währenddessen die geehrte Gottheit erneut inthronisiert wurde. Da die erhaltenen Texte jedoch keinen sicheren Hinweis auf einen *kissû*-Festzyklus liefern, kommt D.F. zu dem erstaunlichen Ergebnis: "The festivals might have been celebrated whenever need required petition of the gods' favor, individually or collectively". (260) Damit rückt er das *kissû*-Fest, dessen Anlaß er beispielsweise bei einer Priesterinnen-Installation sieht, in die Nähe von Bittgeben und Beschwörungen, wozu die Texte allerdings keinen Anlaß geben.

Setzen wir die Überlegungen fort, daß wir es beim *kissû* mit einem Kalender-Fest zu tun haben, dann fällt der in Emar belegte Monat ^{iti.d}NIN.KUR *ša GU.ZA / ku-us-si* "Ninkur vom Thron" (Emar 6/3 13:10'; 150:38)⁽¹⁷⁾ auf, der mit der babylonischen Lautung *kussû* eine Verbindung zu den *kissû*-Festen herstellen dürfte. Also ist der Deutung, die M.E. Cohen — mit anderen Vorüberlegungen — gibt, gewiß der Vorzug zu geben: "These observances may have marked the annual consecration of the god's statue" ⁽¹⁸⁾.

3. Die marzaḥu-Leute von Miki

D.F. bespricht S. 269 den Jahreszyklentext Emar 6/3 446 und fragt in Anm. 269 nach der Bedeutung von dem Wort "*mi-Ki*", dem eine Gruppe von *marzaḥu*-Leuten zugeordnet ist: ^{lu.meš}*marzaḥu ša mi-Ki*.

Nach den Texten aus Ugarit bilden die *marza'u*-Leute eine Gemeinschaft — zu ihr gehörte auch der König — und waren Besitzer von Anwesen, wie Rechtsurkunden zum Transfer von Immobilien verdeutlichen⁽¹⁹⁾. Dort werden sie, wo nötig, mit dem Relativpronomen *ša* und nachfolgendem Ortsnamen näherbestimmt: ^{lu.meš}*mar-ze-i ša ša-at-ra-na*

⁽¹⁷⁾ Siehe M. E. COHEN, *The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East* (Bethesda, MA 1993) 344.

⁽¹⁸⁾ In *Cultic Calendars*, 352, M.E. Cohen fährt fort: "..., although we are unaware of any meaning of the term *kizzu/kissu* which might support this theory". Folglich ist er nicht darauf gekommen, *kissû* mit dem babylonischen *kissû* zu verbinden.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Siehe J. ABOUD, *Die Rolle des Königs und seiner Familie nach den Texten von Ugarit* (Forschungen zur Anthropologie und Religionsgeschichte 27; Münster 1994) 165-171.

RS 15.70 (= PRU 3, S. 130): 4.7.15-16., ...ša uruAri RS 18.01 (= PRU 4, S. 230): 8, ...ša uruZi-ia-ni, Z. 11. Dieser Brauch könnte auch in Emar 6/3 446:92 vorliegen, so daß *mi-ki* ein topographischer oder geographischer Begriff wäre⁽²⁰⁾.

4. Der Totenkult und Emar 6/3 452

Einen informativen Überblick über die wichtigsten Rituale von Emar außer den Inthronisations-Ritualen der Entu-Priesterin des Addu/Ba'al und der *mašartu*-Priesterin des Aštart sowie den der *zuku*- und *kissu*-Feste bietet D.F. am Ende des zweiten Teils im Abschnitt E. *The Other Emar Rituals* (264-272). Dabei teilt er Kollationsergebnisse an den Originalen mit und schneidet zahlreiche Fragen unterschiedlicher Rituale an, so daß es der Leser bei fortschreitender Lektüre als immer schmerzlicher empfindet, nicht weiter in die Tiefe geführt zu werden. Das trifft insbesondere auf den Text Emar 6/3 452 mit den Totenritualen und dazugehörigen Opfern des Monats Abû zu, dessen westliches Vokabular D.F. teilweise aufführt (269-270) und dessen Inhalt er umrißhaft im *Appendix: Rites for the Dead at Emar* (295-301) beschreibt.

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* *

Abschließend sei nochmals betont, daß die obigen Ausführungen als ein Diskussionsbeitrag zu den vielschichtigen Problemen der altsyrischen Religion verstanden sein wollen. D.F. sei nochmals gedankt für seine anregenden und aufschlußreichen Darlegungen, die sicher noch lange konsultiert werden.

Ugarit-Forschung
Schlaunstraße, 2
D-48143 Münster

Manfried DIETRICH

⁽²⁰⁾ Neuere Literatur zu den *marza/iḫu*: J.L. McLAUGHLIN, "The *marzeah* at Ugarit. A Textual and Contextual Study", *UF* 23 (1991) 265-281; O. LORETZ, "Marziḫu im Ugaritischen und biblischen Ahnenkult. Zu Ps 23; 133; Am 6,1-7 und Jer 16,5.8", *Mesopotamica – Ugaritica – Biblica. Festschrift für Kurt Bergerhof zur Vollendung seines 70. Lebensjahres am 7. Mai 1992* (Hrsg. M. DIETRICH – O. LORETZ) (AOAT 232; Kevelaer – Neukirchen-Vluyn 1993) 93-144.

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

Takamitsu MURAOKA, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint (Twelve Prophets)*. Louvain, Peeters, 1993. xxii-257 p. 21 × 28. FB 2100

Le Lexique proposé par T. Muraoka se présente comme un instrument à l'usage des traducteurs anglophones du *Dodekapropheton*: les mots grecs (tels qu'ils sont dans l'édition de J. Ziegler) sont accompagnés d'indications diverses et de traductions jugées les plus exactes pour les contextes où ils apparaissent dans ce corpus de livres bibliques.

L'ouvrage est d'une consultation agréable. La présentation typographique des notices est clairement expliquée dans l'Introduction; la rédaction en est claire, la mise en page élégante. Tous les mots sont enregistrés, y compris les prépositions, les pronoms, les particules.

Les notices se présentent sur plusieurs lignes. Pour les verbes, sont d'abord signalées quelques formes propres à la Septante (parfois cependant les formes sont données sans qu'il y avait vraiment de problème morphologique). Pour tous les mots, des sigles indiquent si le relevé des occurrences est complet, si les mots sont sans attestation connue avant leur emploi dans la Septante, si ce sont des hapax du *Dodekapropheton*, ou de toute la Septante. Vient ensuite, pour un grand nombre de mots, en italiques, une définition périphrastique du sens, suivie, entre guillemets simples, du terme usuel de traduction en anglais: ainsi s. v. ὀλοῦζω, *to cry loud out of sorrow, 'howl'*; s. v. νόμιμος, *individual statute prescribing man's conduct*; Za 1,6: «(you accept) ...my statutes». Pour les autres mots, le Lexique propose d'emblée l'équivalent anglais à utiliser pour traduire les occurrences dans le corpus des Douze. Plusieurs mots de traduction sont proposés selon les contextes. Ainsi s. v. ἀκοή, *thing heard*, «message», «report», «fame», «rumour». En quelques cas, seule la définition est donnée, laissant le traducteur libre de choisir le mot qui sera le mieux adapté à sa compréhension de la phrase. Par exemple, s. v. ἐλέγχω, 1. *to question in public the morality of* (4 occ.), 2. *to demonstrate verbally the virtue, justice or efficacy of* (Ha 1,12, ἐλέγχειν τὴν παιδείαν, cité ici sans traduction, mais de nouveau cité s. v. παιδεία et traduit «to scrutinize his teaching»). On approuve le principe général qui règle la traduction des mots grecs dans le Lexique de T. Muraoka: le vocabulaire des Septante est présenté avec le seul souci de le situer dans les contextes de ses occurrences chez les Douze et en tenant compte de ses usages dans la langue du temps (quelques références sont données à des auteurs post-classiques). L'Auteur traite les mots grecs pour eux-mêmes, sans projeter en eux le sens des mots

hébreux sous-jacents. En cela sa position contraste heureusement avec une étonnante recommandation de l'International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies en vue d'une nouvelle traduction de la Septante: pour souligner la dépendance de la Septante à l'égard du texte hébreu, on prendra comme lexique anglais de base celui de *The New Revised Standard Version* (c'est-à-dire les mots qui traduisent l'hébreu!), partout où la version ne diverge pas sensiblement de l'hébreu. C'est croire qu'il y a un décalque lexical parfait entre l'hébreu et le grec, que les mots grecs de la Septante disent exactement la même chose que les mots hébreux et qu'on peut les traduire en anglais comme on traduit l'hébreu. T. Muraoka évite cette erreur. Il montre, dans son Introduction, que son travail a pris naissance en Australie en accord avec d'excellents hellénistes, J. A. L. Lee et G. H. R. Horsley.

En même temps qu'il propose des traductions, souvent accompagnées de références bibliographiques et de quelques renvois à des interprétations patristiques, le Lexique donne un large choix d'occurrences du mot dans le corpus envisagé, parfois la totalité des références, avec un classement des principaux sens, l'indication des constructions syntaxiques, et des phrases entières citées et traduites. Tout cela est d'un grand intérêt. On peut seulement objecter au classement en de multiples sens qu'il s'agit en fait non pas de «sens» mais d'«emplois» des mots dans leurs divers contextes: un même mot se traduit différemment parce qu'il est pris dans une syntaxe différente (voir par ex. γίνομαι: les «sens» dépendent des emplois en contexte). La sémantique a partie liée avec la syntaxe. Dans ces classements, on note parfois de bons groupements de textes faisant apparaître des emplois nouveaux. Ainsi s. v. λαμβάνω 7, *to pronounce, utter* (4 occ. au sens de proférer une parole de deuil, une raillerie, un blâme).

Le Lexique ajoute sur une autre ligne quelques mots du Lexique auxquels l'utilisateur est invité à se reporter: il s'agit tantôt des composés d'un verbe avec les différents préfixes, tantôt de synonymes, tantôt de mots opposés, tantôt de mots de la même famille ou du même domaine. Ces renvois, nécessairement sélectifs, n'ont peut-être pas une grande utilité pour la lexicologie (les mots ne sont pas regroupés en familles) mais ils suggèrent souvent des champs sémantiques (lexique de la douleur, s. v. ὀδύνη; noms d'armes, s. v. ῥομφαία). Il est vrai que pour mener à bien l'étude lexicologique de ces champs, il faut ensuite comparer ces groupes de mots au groupe équivalent (et différent) de mots hébreux recouvrant le même champ.

En dernier lieu sont rappelées les racines hébraïques auxquelles correspondent les mots grecs: précédées du numéro dont elles sont affectées dans la Concordance de Hatch-Redpath, elles sont suivies, entre crochets droits, du nombre de cas où le mot grec correspond à la racine indiquée. Malheureusement il n'est généralement pas précisé quel mot grec est en équivalence avec quelle racine. Pour l'apprendre, il faut se reporter à la Concordance, ou vérifier sur le texte hébreu. Par exemple, pour ἀνατολή, le lexique distingue *the quarter of sunrise, east* pour 5 occurrences (ajouter Am 8,12), et *shoot of plants* pour Za 3,8 et 6,12. Trois racines hébraïques sont indiquées pour ces 7 occurrences (quatre fois il s'agit de מָזָל, deux fois

de מִצָּר, et une fois de מִצָּרָה), mais nous n'apprenons pas de quelles occurrences il s'agit. Pour ἑορτή, les douze occurrences citées correspondent 9 fois à חג, trois fois à מועד mais on ne sait pas quelles sont ces trois équivalences minoritaires. Et l'on peut multiplier les exemples. Il eût été pourtant utile d'indiquer, comme c'est fait parfois pour quelques équivalences rares, que tel mot grec, correspondant majoritairement à telle racine hébraïque, a été pris dans tel autre texte de façon exceptionnelle pour rendre telle autre racine: ces indications permettent d'étudier les choix lexicaux des traducteurs.

Cette partie des notices a été par ailleurs particulièrement bien travaillée par l'hébraïsant qu'est l'Auteur: il apporte des améliorations à la Concordance de Hatch-Redpath en signalant des erreurs, en suggérant des modifications, en proposant des hypothèses sur d'éventuelles confusions de lecture du traducteur. Il y a là un apport important.

La qualité du travail qui a présidé à l'élaboration de ce Lexique permet au recenseur de proposer quelques discussions. On s'interrogera d'abord sur un point secondaire: était-il opportun d'introduire, à côté des mots du *Dodekapropheton*, des mots rares de la Septante dont il était possible de donner aisément toutes les références (au total il s'agit de 162 mots, la plupart absents des Douze)? Peut-être ont-ils été cités pour montrer des familles de mots (ainsi la présence de νόσταγμα, νουσταγμός, absents du *Dodekapropheton*, serait justifiée par l'occurrence de νουστάζω en Na 3,18?). Cette justification est plus faible pour quelques autres, par exemple pour des hapax comme μάθημα de Jr 13,21 (à cause de μανθάνω?); ὀνομασία de Si 23,9; ὀνοματογραφία de 1 Esd 6,11; 8,48 (à cause de ὄνομα?).

On exprime ensuite un regret: sont absents du Lexique des mots présents dans les manuscrits du *Dodekapropheton* mais qui n'ont pas été retenus par J. Ziegler. Probablement par souci de simplicité et d'efficacité, le Lexique, en effet, enregistre précisément et exclusivement les mots de l'édition critique de J. Ziegler, celle-ci étant considérée comme donnant le texte à traduire. L'utilisateur du Lexique n'est pas invité à connaître les variantes rejetées par Ziegler. A de rares exceptions près (Intr. ix-x), ce principe est suivi même si le mot retenu par Ziegler est une conjecture, sans l'appui d'aucun manuscrit. Ainsi pour Ha 2,5 le Lexique enregistre la conjecture κατοινώομαι (κατοινωμένος, «to become inebriated with wine») et non la forme unanime de la tradition manuscrite, κατοιδόμενος («arrogant»), qu'il est cependant possible de conserver (D. Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*, tome 3 [OBO 50/3; Göttingen-Fribourg 1992] 845-846). T. Muraoka, qui connaît mieux que quiconque l'intérêt des variantes des manuscrits pour l'histoire textuelle de la Septante et de ses révisions, s'est volontairement limité à ce qui est immédiatement utile pour le simple traducteur. Et il n'a pas davantage mis dans son projet d'enregistrer les variantes lexicales des autres traducteurs (Théodotion, Aquila, Symmaque), indispensables cependant à connaître pour qui veut mesurer par contraste les erreurs ou les choix interprétatifs du traducteur de la Septante.

Les questions les plus intéressantes posées par le Lexique sont d'ordre sémantique. On aurait aimé que tous les mots dont une simple traduction

est ici proposée fussent d'abord définis par un sens fondamental d'où viennent les sens dérivés. Par ex. si λῆμμα signifie *material gain, profit* (1 occ.) et d'autre part *prophetic message*, y a-t-il un lien sémantique entre ces sens? Les deux sens se déduisent du sens fondamental «ce que l'on reçoit» (λαμβάνω); pour le prophète, c'est sa «charge» (Vulg. *onus*), c'est-à-dire, en effet, l'oracle dont il est chargé. Pour παραβολή et πρόβλημα, on aimerait apprendre par suite de quelle évolution sémantique, à partir de quel sens, ces mots doivent être traduits, — nous dit-on —, par *mocking speech* et *riddle*. Lorsque le Lexique donne ainsi directement le sens des mots dans le contexte du *Dodekapropheton*, on voit bien qu'il résulte d'une traduction des textes faite par l'Auteur. Et l'on se félicite que l'Auteur cite si généreusement tant de phrases difficiles accompagnées d'une traduction, souvent fort éclairante. L'écueil cependant est qu'il est parfois possible de comprendre la phrase autrement que lui. Il faut, en ce cas, remonter à un sens plus général du mot pour trouver un autre mot de traduction. Ce recours au sens fondamental ou usuel du mot évite parfois l'invention d'un «sens» décalqué sur l'hébreu.

Prenons l'exemple du mot ἀρετή: T. Muraoka donne d'emblée *praise, laudatory utterance directed to God* avec référence à Ha 3,3, «the praise of Him filled heavens» (en parallélisme avec αἴνεσις) et à Za 6,13. Dans les deux cas, ἀρετή correspond à תִּהַל, «magnificence», «grandeur» (sans équivalent fixe dans la Septante) tandis que αἴνεσις rend תְּהִלָּה, «louange», «gloire». Il se trouve que le traducteur d'Isaïe a rendu quatre fois תְּהִלָּה par ἀρετή (au pluriel) et que ces quatre exemples, avec les deux exemples du *Dodekapropheton* (pour תִּהַל) sont les seuls emplois d'ἀρετή dans les livres de la Septante dont nous connaissons l'original hébreu. D'après les contextes et en considérant le substrat hébreu, on en déduit qu'ἀρετή, ou plus exactement ἀρεταί, est employé de façon particulière au sens de «louange» (voir 1P 2,9 et l'article ἀρετή dans les Lexiques du Nouveau Testament). Il ne faut toutefois pas affirmer, comme le fait le Lexicon Liddell-Scott-Jones, que ce sens est «fréquent» dans la LXX. Pour Ha 3,3, ne peut-on plutôt dire que le traducteur a pris ἀρετή en son sens premier dans la langue grecque, comme chez Homère, où le mot désigne l'«excellence» d'un homme ou d'un dieu, sa «majesté»? Ce sens convient au passage d'Habacuc.

Parfois, une plus grande attention doit être portée à la syntaxe de la phrase. Ainsi, pour le mot ἐκστασις, dont la définition donnée est *loss of mental equilibrium, displacement of mind*, les trois occurrences du *Dodekapropheton* sont présentées en deux groupes, «of God, ἐν -ει «in frenzy» en Ha 3,14 et Za 12,4 (avec l'indication du terme parallèle ἐν παραφρονήσει) ou «caused by God» en Za 14,13. On s'étonne qu'il soit dit «de Dieu» qu'il frappe «in frenzy» (même interprétation s.v. παραφρόνησις: «*delirium, of God*»). En Za 12,4 on a trois (et non deux) expressions parallèles: Dieu annonce qu'il «frappera» (πατάξω) le cheval ἐν ἐκστάσει et le cavalier ἐν παραφρονήσει et tous les chevaux des peuples ἐν ἀποτυφλώσει. Or le Lexique lui-même signale, s.v. πατάσσω, que la construction avec ἐν τινι indique l'instrument utilisé pour l'action ou le mal causé par l'action, justement avec l'exemple de Za 12,4 (on reconnaît le

décalque usuel de la construction hébraïque): Dieu «frappera» (le cheval, le cavalier, etc. ...) «*de terreur, de folie, d'aveuglement*». En Za 12,4, comme en Za 14,13 et ailleurs, *ἔκστασις* est la «terreur», l'«égarement» envoyé par Dieu, et non la «fureur» avec laquelle lui-même agirait (voir par ex. 1 R 11,7 et 14,15, *ἔκστασις κυρίου* = *ἔκστασις παρὰ κυρίου*).

Un recenseur francophone osera-t-il contester les choix du lexique anglais de T. Muraoka? Dans un certain nombre de cas, les mots proposés n'apparaissent pas adéquats. Ainsi les traductions des trois mots *ὀνειδίζω* (*to censure, criticise*), *ὀνειδισμός* (*bad reputation, disgrace*), *ὀνειδος* (*being disgraced, humiliated*) paraissent faibles alors que les blâmes, les insultes, les invectives entraînent la honte dans les contextes où ces mots sont employés. Ou encore s.v. *παιδεία*: 1. *education, instruction* (in religion and morality), 2. *body of knowledge to be inculcated*, avec la traduction par «teaching» en Ha 1,12 (cité ci-dessus): ces traductions laissent de côté le sens de «éducation-correction» et même de «châtiment» que le mot a souvent ailleurs dans la Septante et peut-être aussi en Ha 1,12.

L'intérêt suscité par le Lexique de T. Muraoka est si grand que l'on pourrait prolonger les discussions à propos de bien d'autres mots du *Dodekapropheton*.

T. Muraoka a réalisé le projet tel qu'il l'a défini dans son Introduction, avec ses limites précises. C'est bien un «Lexique» et non pas un instrument de travail pour la critique textuelle ou l'étude des procédés de traduction. Ce Lexique situe très correctement le vocabulaire du *Dodekapropheton* dans le contexte syntactique des phrases et présente heureusement la langue des Septante dans la continuité de la langue grecque. Il évite la tentation de lire sous les mots grecs leur substrat hébreu. L'utilisateur se félicitera d'avoir entre les mains un ouvrage qui traduit les mots et les phrases des Douze prophètes mineurs pour eux-mêmes, dans leur propre contexte, donnant à cette version sa pleine valeur de «texte», un texte qui sera pris comme base pour de nombreux commentaires.

121 bis rue Notre-Dame des Champs
F-75006 Paris

Marguerite HARL

G. C. CHIRICHIGNO, *Debt Slavery in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (JSOT Supplement Series 141). Sheffield, JSOT Press, 1993.
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Die Monographie geht auf eine Dissertation zurück, die von Gordon J. Wenham betreut wurde. Sie hat es sich zur Aufgabe gemacht, Bedeutung und "Sitz im Leben" der Freilassungsgesetze in Ex 21,2-6.7-11; Dtn 15,12-18 und Lev 25,39-54 zu erheben. Der Autor (C.) holt dazu weit aus und wendet sich zunächst nach einem kurzen Forschungsüberblick dem sozialen Hintergrund der Schuldklaverei in Mesopotamien zu, da er der Meinung ist, daß die bisherigen Arbeiten zum Thema (Mendelsohn; Cardellini u. a.) den mesopotamischen Hintergrund mißverstanden haben

und sich nicht auf die Schuldklaverei, sondern irrtümlich auf die Vollsklaverei ("chattel-slavery") konzentrierten und den "Sitz im Leben" der biblischen Sklavengesetze zu sehr durch Ereignisse im Umfeld der hypothetischen Quellendatierungen bestimmt sahen.

Nach einer sozialhistorischen Skizze zur Entwicklung der Ökonomie in Mesopotamien und der Entstehung der Schuldklaverei in diesem Kontext wendet C. sich den einschlägigen mesopotamischen Gesetzes- und Vertragstexten zu. §§ 114-119 des Kodex Hammurapi (CH) interpretiert er auf dem Hintergrund des *hubullûm*-Darlehens. Im Gegensatz zum *šapartu*-Darlehen, bei dem das Pfand bei Vertragsabschluß in die Hand des Gläubigers übergeht, bleibt es beim *hubullûm*-Darlehen als Hypothek im Besitz des Schuldners. Innerhalb von CH §§ 114-119 werden zwei Arten, wie die verpfändeten Personen in die Gewalt des Gläubigers geraten, differenziert. CH §§ 114-116 betreffen die *nipûtum*. Sie bezeichnet ein Pfand, das der Gläubiger zur Erzwingung der Rückzahlung des Kredits nimmt. Die Gläubiger werden angehalten, die als *nipûtum* genommenen Personen anständig zu behandeln, da sie weiterhin dem Schuldner zugehören. CH §§ 117-119 dagegen betreffen die Pfandnahme von Personen, nachdem sich der Gläubiger am Fälligkeitsdatum als insolvent erwiesen hat. Wiederum sind zwei Formen zu unterscheiden. Eine Übergabe *ana kaspim* ("für Geld") erfolgt endgültig als Verfallspfand, während eine Übergabe *ana kissâtîm* ("zum Schuld[sklaven]dienst") eine Lösefrist vorsieht. CH § 117 wollte insofern eine Rechtsnovelle sein, daß beide Rechtsformen parallelisiert und in jedem Fall verpfändeten Familienmitgliedern eine Freilassung nach drei Jahren eingeräumt werde. Anhand der §§ 44 (Tafel A); 2; 3 (Tafel C) und 7 (Tafel G + C) des Mittelassyrischen Kodex (mass. K.) erörtert C. das *šapartu*-Schuldverhältnis des zinsantichretischen Besitzpfandes. Personen niederen Standes, Sklaven, Diener und andere Güter gehen als Verfallspfand im Falle, daß der Kredit nicht zurückgezahlt wird, in den endgültigen Besitz des Gläubigers über (mass. K. A. § 44; G + C § 7), während Vollbürgern eine zeitliche Begrenzung des Schuldverhältnisses eingeräumt wurde (mass. K. C. §§ 2; 3). Anschließend diskutiert C. die altbabylonischen *mīšarum*-Edikte, die unterschiedliche Arten von Schuldverpflichtungen annullieren. § 20 des *Ammi-šaduqa*-Edikts regelt die Freilassung von Schuldklaven, die *ana kaspim*, *ana kissâtîm* oder *ana mazzāzani* übergeben wurden. Während eine Freilassung von Schuldklaven, die aufgrund einer Insolvenz des Schuldners als Verfalls- oder Lösungspfand in die Verfügung des Gläubigers übergegangen sind, einsichtig sei, sei die Parallelisierung mit dem Pfand *ana mazzāzani*, dem Besitzpfand, erstaunlich. C. erwägt mit B. Eichler (*Indenture at Nuzi* [New Haven 1973] 82-83), hier eine dritte Partei einzuführen, einen Gläubiger, der einem Schuldner einen Kredit gewährt habe, um eine bereits bestehende Schuld zu begleichen, so daß eine Pfandnahme *ana mazzāzani* mit den beiden anderen parallelisiert sei. Aus der Parallelität zwischen CH § 117 und § 20 des *Ammi-šaduqa*-Edikts schließt C., daß CH § 117 eine Reform indendierte, die weiter ging als die *mīšarum*-Edikte, was darauf hinweise, daß § 117 Programm geblieben sei, das nicht realisiert wurde. Schließlich behandelt C. die *tidenûtu*-Arbeits-

verträge im Verhältnis zu den *ḫābiru*-Arbeitsverträgen aus Nuzi und zeigt auf, daß sie nicht miteinander vermengt werden dürfen, wie es gelegentlich bei der Interpretation der Hintergründe von Ex 21,2-6 geschah. Der *tidennu*, ein Einheimischer, arbeitete gegen einen Kredit zinsantichretisch im Dienste des Gläubigers und fungierte gleichzeitig als Pfand. Sein Status war besser als der des ausländischen *ḫābiru*. Gemeinsam aber ist beiden Arbeitsverhältnissen, daß ihnen freiwillig eingegangene Arbeitsverträge zugrunde liegen.

Man wird der Kategorisierung der Schuldknechtschaftsverhältnisse durch C. zustimmen können. Sie deckt sich mit den u. a. von F. R. Kraus (*Königliche Verfügungen in altbabylonischer Zeit* [Leiden 1984] 264-284) erarbeiteten Ergebnissen. Wo C. darüber hinausführen will, wird man Bedenken anmelden. §§ 2-3 der Tafel C des Mittelassyrischen Kodex sagen nichts von einer zeitlichen Begrenzung des Schulddienstverhältnisses, sondern wollen lediglich unterbinden, daß ein Vollbürger während der Schuldknechtschaft von dem Gläubiger verkauft wird. Anders lautende Urteile in der Literatur beruhen auf einer nicht angebrachten Harmonisierung mit dem Kodex Hammurapi. In § 20 des *Ammi-šaduqua*-Ediktes bedarf es nicht der Einführung eines zweiten Gläubigers. Mit der Parallelisierung von Hypothekpfand und Besitzpfand *ana mazzāzani* werden alle Formen von Schuldverhältnissen aufgehoben einschließlich solcher, in denen sich die verpfändete Person als Besitzpfand in der Verfügung des Gläubigers befindet. Schließlich weist der Mari-Brief M. 11009 + 11010:20-27 darauf hin, daß auch unabhängig von *mīšarum*-Akten Freilassungen vorkamen, CH § 117 als rechtsgelehrtes Reformprogramm also Anhalt an der Rechtspraxis noch über die *mīšarum*-Akte hinaus hatte.

Im Gegensatz zu der einschlägigen Arbeit von I. Cardellini behandelt C. einen nur schmalen Ausschnitt des keilschriftlichen Sklavenrechts, indem er sich auf die Schuldknechtschaft beschränkt. Mit dieser Beschränkung aber sind die Weichen für die Analyse des alttestamentlichen Sklavenrechts gestellt.

In einem ersten Schritt erhebt er wieder den sozialhistorischen Hintergrund der Schuldknechtschaft in Israel. Ihre Ursachen sieht er in einer besonders seit dem 8. Jh. zunehmenden Insolvenz der freien Bauern, die durch Steuern, Rentenkapitalismus, hohe Zinsen und einen Zusammenbruch der größeren Gentilgemeinschaft gefährdet wurden. Da aber schon das vortaatliche Israel nicht egalitär war, sondern sozial differenziert, kann schon hier der Hintergrund für die Freilassungsgesetze liegen. Während im Kodex Hammurapi und im Mittelassyrischen Kodex der Terminus *‘ebed* nur für den Vollsklaven, nicht aber den Schuldklaven verwendet wird, gebraucht das AT *‘ebed* für beide Arten der Sklaverei, so daß nach Kriterien der Unterscheidung zu suchen sei. Dazu werden die Sklavengesetze des AT einer erschöpfenden Exegese unterzogen. Ex 21,20-21 deutet C. überzeugend auf den Vollsklaven, da der israelitische Schuldknecht unter das Gesetz Ex 21,12.(13-14) fällt, so daß CH § 116 auch nicht als Parallele heranzuziehen ist. *nāqōm yinnāqēm* unterstreiche die Verantwortung der Rechtsgemeinschaft, den Tod des Sklaven mit der Todesstrafe zu sanktionieren. Diese auffällige Terminologie sei gewählt, um deutlich zu machen, daß, wenn die Gemeinschaft dem nicht nachkomme, Gott selbst den Tod des Sklaven

rächen werde. Weniger überzeugend ist die Deutung von *ya'āmōd* parallel zu *yāqūm* in V. 19 auf die Beendigung der Bettlägerigkeit. Die Zeitangabe von zwei Tagen als Ausschlussfrist widerspricht dem, so daß die von L. Schwienhorst-Schönberger (*Das Bundesbuch* [Berlin 1990] 65-66) vorgeschlagene Übersetzung mit "Dienst tun" vorzuziehen ist. Mit Ex 21,20-21 bezieht C. auch Ex 21,26-27.32 auf den Vollsklaven und grenzt sich damit von I. Cardellini ab, der nur Ex 21,32 auf die "echten Sklaven", die übrigen Gesetze dagegen auf die Schuldklaven bezieht. Damit verstelle sich Cardellini die Einsicht in die sozialreformerische Bedeutung dieser Gesetze, die deutlicher als im Keilschriftrecht auch den Vollsklaven schützen. Nur dort, wo das Nomen *'ebed* durch *'ibrī* näher gekennzeichnet sei, sei das Gesetz auf die Schuldknechtschaft beschränkt (Ex 21,2-6; Dtn 15,12-18).

Die Analyse dieser beiden Gesetze in Ex 21,2-6; Dtn 15,12-18 macht das Zentrum des Buches aus. C. erkennt an, daß die Sklavengesetze im Bundesbuch aus ihrem redaktionellen Kontext heraus zu interpretieren sind und rekonstruiert in 21,2-27 eine chiasmische Struktur. Gleichzeitig folgt er V. Wagner (*ZAW* 81 [1969] 176-182), der mit anderer, an H. Petschows nur inhaltlichen Gliederung orientierten Struktur das Vorbild der Redaktion dieses Abschnitts im Kodex Hammurapi vermutete, ohne daß C. der Widerspruch aufgefallen wäre. Ihm liegt daran, einen möglichst engen Zusammenhang zwischen 21,2-6 und CH §117 herzustellen, der entweder durch direkte Anhängigkeit oder gemeinsame Abhängigkeit von einer "amoritischen" Rechtstradition zustande gekommen sein soll, um auf diesem Hintergrund 21,2-6 zu interpretieren. C. weist Interpretationen zurück, die auf dem Hintergrund der *habiru*- und *tidenmūtu*-Verträge aus Nuzi, den *'ebed 'ibrī* auf den sozial Deklassierten deuten, der sich in den Sklavendienst verkauft und nach 6 Jahren Dienst freigelassen in ein Klientelverhältnis *lahopšī* übergehe (so S.M. Paul; N.P. Lemche u.a.). In Dtn 15,12-18 geht es eindeutig um die Schuldknechtschaft eines Israeliten. Für jemanden, der gem. der Nuzi-Verträge ein vertragliches Dienstverhältnis eingegangen ist, wäre eine Beendigung dieses Dienstverhältnisses kaum ein Vorteil. Eine Klasse von *ḥupšū* ist im AT nicht belegt. Vielmehr sei CH §117 die sich anbietende Parallele. Wie in CH §117 gehe es um die zeitliche Befristung der Schuldknechtschaft. *qnh 'ebed* sei am ehesten im Sinne einer Übergabe *ana kaspim* zu verstehen. C. notiert aber auch Elemente in 21,2-6, die keine Entsprechung in CH §117 haben. Das gilt für den Zeitraum von sieben Jahren, die Ehregelung und die Möglichkeit der Umwandlung des befristeten in ein lebenslanges Dienstverhältnis, das C. nicht als das eines Vollsklaven verstehen will. Schließlich sind in 21,7-11 die Rechte einer käuflich zur Ehe mit dem Käufer oder seinem Sohn erworbenen Frau, die einer Freien gleichgestellt wird, geregelt. Gerade die Interpretation von 21,7-11 auf dem Hintergrund altorientalischer Ehe- und Adoptionsverträge bringt Fortschritte. Auch wird man dem Verf. zustimmen, daß es in 21,2-6 wie in CH §117 um die Schuldknechtschaft geht. Doch ist damit nun keineswegs ausreichend begründet, daß 21,2-6 von CH §117 oder einer gemeinsam zugrundeliegenden altorientalischen Rechtstradition abhängig sei. P. Koschaker (*ZSRG.R* 49 [1929] 194-195) hat mit Recht darauf hingewiesen, "daß eine selbst in Einzelheiten gehende Übereinstimmung in Rechtssätzen

zweier Rechte noch gar nichts für Entlehnung beweist, daß vielmehr selbständige Parallelentwicklung eine viel größere Rolle spielt als man früher geglaubt hat". Das gilt auch für 21,2-11. Neben den oben angeführten Besonderheiten weist gerade die implizite theologische Begründung durch die 6/7-Struktur, die ihre Wurzeln im Maṣṣotfest hat auf einen genuin jüdischen Ursprung des Gesetzes. Im Gegensatz zu CH §§117-119 sind die Kriterien der Differenzierung des Rechtsfalles nicht in der Zugehörigkeit zu einer sozialen Schicht, sondern der Volkszugehörigkeit begründet. Der Rechtssatz 21,2-6 will den permanenten Verlust der Freiheit als Verfallspfand unterbinden. Die Einschränkung in 21,5-6 macht aber nur Sinn, wenn auch die freiwillige Selbstversklavung, die C. ausschließen will, durch dieses Gesetz mit erfaßt wird. Wird die Freilassung ausgeschlagen, so geht der Sklave nicht in ein undefiniertes Dienstverhältnis über, sondern das des Vollsklaven. So muß auch C. einräumen, daß die Eheregelung in 21,4 aus dem Vollsklavenrecht stammt. Es ist aber keineswegs notwendig, die Analogie der *tidennūtu*-Verträge aus Nuzi und ähnlicher Verträge des Selbstverkaufs seit der UrIII-Zeit so kategorisch abzulehnen, wie es C. tut, zumal er für 21,7-11 durchaus die Nähe zu Adoptions- und Eheverträge *ṭuppi mārtūti u kallatūti* anerkennen muß, wenn nur gewahrt bleibt, daß es nicht um unmittelbare Abhängigkeit weder vom Kodex Hammurapi noch von den Nuziverträgen geht, sondern nur um rechtshistorische Analogien zu den genuin jüdischen, im Horizont der JHWH-Verehrung formulierten Sklavengesetzes in 21,2-11. Schließlich entfällt so die Notwendigkeit, die Freilassungsgesetze des Bundesbuches und des Dtn so kategorisch von dem Gesetz in Lev 25,39-43 abzusetzen, von dem auch C. einräumt, "this law clearly refers to the head of a nuclear or extended family who is forced to enter into servitude with his family (v. 41)" (330). Schließlich wird man auch nicht in dem Sinne zwischen 21,2-11 und 21,20-21.26-27.32 eine Trennlinie ziehen, daß die letzteren Gesetze nur die Vollsklaven, 21,2-11 aber die Schuldsklaven betreffen. Daß eine Frau nur aufgrund von Schulden in die Ehe verkauft wird, ist aus 21,7-11 nicht herauszulesen. Die Gründe dafür können vielfältig sein. Auch wird sie gerade nicht in ein Schuldknechtschaftsverhältnis verkauft, sondern in eine lebenslange Abhängigkeit. Der Rechtssatz will sie als verheiratete Frau vor dem Schicksal einer Vollsklavin bewahren, indem er ihr den Status einer freien Ehefrau zuerkennt. Das verbindet nun 21,7-11 mit 21,2-6. Auch hier soll für den hebräischen Sklaven der Status des Vollsklaven vermieden werden zugunsten des zeitlich befristeten Dienstverhältnisses. Die Rechtssätze intendieren damit, daß es für einen freien Hebräer den Status des Vollsklaven in der ersten Generation nur als freiwilligen und kultisch besiegelten gehen kann. Keine entsprechende Regelung ist für diejenigen vorgesehen, die als Sklaven im Hause ihres Herrn geboren werden. Hier läßt der Rechtssatz eine Lücke. Davon abgesehen werden die Vollsklaven mehrheitlich Nichthebräer gewesen sein. Die Rechtssätze in 21,20-21.26-27, die fundamentale Rechte der Sklaven schützen, gelten unterschiedslos allen Sklaven einschließlich der Schuldsklaven. C. verzichtet auf jede überlieferungs- und redaktionsgeschichtliche Erhellung des jeweiligen Kontextes der Sklavengesetze. Sie vermag zu zeigen, daß die Rechtssätze 21,20-21.26-27.32 zu einer eigenständigen Sammlung des Körperverletzungsrechts gehören, vor die

21,2-11 erst bei der Redaktion des größeren Zusammenhangs 20,24-26; 21,2-22,26* zusammen mit 22,20-26* gestellt wurde, so daß 21,2-11 und 21,20-21,26-27,32 unterschiedlichen literarischen Schichten im Bundesbuch angehören. Darin ist es begründet, daß 21,20-21,26-27 einen Schutz der Sklaven vor dem Herrn nur innerhalb der bestehenden Institution der Sklaverei, die nicht zwischen Voll- und Schuldsklaverei differenziert, intendiert, wobei auch die Rechte des Herrn gegen Verletzungen durch Dritte geschützt werden (21,32), in 21,2-11 dagegen prinzipiell die Institution der Sklaverei für den Hebräer eingeschränkt wird. Sie wird zeitlich begrenzt und nur aufgrund eines freiwilligen Entschlusses lebenslang vorgesehen, während lebenslange Ehebindungen von Sklavinnen zugunsten ihrer Gleichstellung mit einer freien Frau aufgehoben werden. Der Reformwille in 21,2-11 ist also radikaler als die auf CH §117 fixierte Interpretation durch C. zu erkennen gibt.

In der Analyse von Dtn 15,12-18 verzichtet C. erneut auf eine eigene literarische Erhellung des Kontextes, sondern schließt sich S. A. Kaufmann und G. Braulik an, 15,12-18 als Teil der Explikation des Sabbatgebotes des Dekalogs in 14,22-16,17 zu interpretieren. 15,1-3 fordere den regelmäßigen totalen Schuldenerlaß, dem §3 des Edikts des *Ammi-šaduqa* entsprechend. Das Freilassungsgesetz in 15,12-18 verordne wie Ex 21,2-6 die Freilassung des Schuldsklaven, die zwar sachlich aber nicht terminlich mit der *Šemiṭta* in 15,1-3 verknüpft sei. Über Ex 21,2-6 hinaus werden in 15,12 auch die Frauen in die Freilassungsregelung einbezogen, während umgekehrt die Eheregelungen in Ex 21,3f. und Ex 21,7-11 fehlen. C. lehnt Thesen, die darin den Niederschlag einer Angleichung der Stellung der Frau in der jüdischen Gesellschaft an die des Mannes sehen wollen ab und folgt E. W. Hengstenberg, der Ex 21,2-11 mit 15,12-18 in der These harmonisiert, daß Ex 21,2-7 von einer Frau handelt, die in die Ehe verkauft wurde, 15,12 aber die Frau betrifft, die in einen nichtsexuellen Dienst verkauft worden sei. C. zieht zurecht die Schlußfolgerung, daß Ex 21,4,7-11 nicht durch 15,12-18 außer Kraft gesetzt wurde. Wenn es aber darum geht, zu erklären, was es bedeutet, daß 15,12-18 einerseits Ex 21,2-11 revidiert, andererseits aber Ex 21,2-11 weiterhin gültig sein soll, dann greift C. entschieden zu kurz, wenn er mit J. G. McConville ein mangelndes Interesse des Dtn an Details als Erklärung in Anschlag bringt. Auch für 15,1-3 notiert C. die Verbindung mit der *Šemiṭta*-Gesetzgebung des Bundesbuches in Ex 23,10-11 ohne sie zu erklären. Die Ausleger deuten 15,1-11 meist als Überführung der agrarischen Bracheregelung in Ex 23,10-11 in die eines Schuldenerlasses. Die Überschrift in Dtn 15,1 läßt eine folgende Brachjahrregelung Ex 23,10-11 entsprechend erwarten. Stattdessen werden mit *zēh dēbar haššēmiṭtā* die neuen sozialen Konsequenzen entfaltet, deren Grundlage die Brachjahrregelung des BB ist. Sie wird nicht abgeschafft oder umgedeutet, sondern bleibt gültige Voraussetzung der dtn Regelung. Das gilt nun auch entsprechend für die Freilassungsregelung Ex 21,7-11. Sie gilt weiterhin. Dann aber stellt sich die Frage, warum in Dtn 15 nur Ex 21,2-6, nicht aber 21,7-11 aufgenommen wurde. C. hat sich die Antwort auf diese Frage verstellt, wenn er, wiederum J. G. McConville folgend, damit rechnet, daß das Dtn nicht eine Kultzentralisation im Blick habe, sondern eine Vielzahl

von Heiligtümern voraussetze, so daß also auch Ex 21,5-6 weiterhin vorausgesetzt werde. Wieder wird das mangelnde Interesse des Dtn an Details für die Auslassung verantwortlich gemacht. Doch hat u.a. M. Weinfeld den richtigen Weg gewiesen. Ex 21,5-6 wurde durch den Deuteronomiker revidiert und die feierliche Selbstverpflichtung von den Lokalheiligtümern an die Wohnhäuser verlegt, um so der Kultzentralisation Rechnung zu tragen. Damit wird allerdings die Freilassungsgesetzgebung keineswegs "saekularisiert", so M. Weinfeld, sondern konsequenter noch als im Bundesbuch theologisch verortet. Das heilsgeschichtliche Handeln Gottes dient als Vorbild für das ethische Handeln des Menschen, das auch in seinen Alltagsbezügen konsequent dem Gotteswillen unterstellt wird. Das Dtn reformiert das BB in den Rechtssätzen, die von der Kultzentralisation betroffen sind. In den übrigen Rechtssätzen, die keinen Bezug zur Kultzentralisation haben, wird das BB insbesondere durch das Familienrecht ergänzt. Das aber bedeutet in der Konsequenz, daß das BB keineswegs durch das Dtn ersetzt werden soll, sondern als dessen Grundlage weiterhin als gültig angesehen wird. Nur so erklärt es sich auch, daß das Bundesbuch nachdtn in die Sinaiperikope eingefügt wurde, während das Dtn zu seiner Repetition im Lande Moab wurde.

Schließlich wendet sich C. den Freilassungsgesetzen des Heiligkeitgesetzes in Lev 25,39-43.47-55 zu. Er versteht Lev 25 als literarische Einheit, die in V. 25-54 den Stufen der Verarmung einer israelitischen Familie folgend aufgebaut sei. Zuerst muß ein Israelit einen Teil seines Landes verkaufen (25,25-34), dann ist er nicht mehr in der Lage, aus eigener Kraft zu wirtschaften (V. 35-38) und muß sich mit seiner Familie an einen Mitisraeliten (V. 39-43) oder an einen Nichtisraeliten (V. 47-54) verkaufen. C. wendet sich zurecht gegen die Interpretation von Kodex Ešnunna § 39 und 25,29 durch R. Westbrook, die Auslösung des Bodens sei nur dann statthaft, wenn er im Falle der Insolvenz unter dem Verkehrswert verkauft worden sei. In jedem Falle besteht ein Löserecht. C. will das Freilassungsprogramm in 25,39-54 mit dem des BB und des Dtn in der Form harmonisieren, daß die 7- und 50-Jahresrhythmen auf unterschiedliche Höhen der Schulden bezogen seien. Der Siebenjahreszyklus wurde CH § 117 entsprechend in solchen Fällen relevant, in denen ein Schuldner gezwungen war, ein Mitglied seiner Familie zu verkaufen, um einen fällig gewordenen Kredit zurückzuzahlen. Der 50-Jahreszyklus kam zum Tragen, wenn ein freier Israelit gezwungen war, sein Erbland oder sich selbst mit seiner Familie zu verkaufen. Diese Harmonisierung zwingt dazu, *yimmākēr* in Dtn 15,12 passivisch, in Lev 25,39 dagegen reflexiv zu interpretieren und schon in Ex 21,2-6 den Aspekt des Selbstverkaufs auszusondern. Vor allem verzichtet C. darauf, das literarische Verhältnis von Lev 25 zu Ex 21 und Dtn 15 genauer in den Blick zu nehmen, wenn er auch andeutet, daß er eher an eine Priorität von Lev 25 gegenüber Dtn 15 denkt, obwohl er notiert, daß in Lev 25 die geschwisterliche Terminologie des Dtn Verwendung findet. So bleibt auch die Frage offen, ob Lev 25 Teil der Priesterschrift ist, oder eines Heiligkeitgesetzes, das älter als P ist, so die ältere Forschung mit J. Wellhausen, oder Ergänzung von P. Vor allem aber geht C. nicht dem literarischen Zusammenhang mit Ex 21 und Dtn 15 genauer nach. Im Gegensatz zur Erlaßjahrregelung in Dtn 15 wird an

Ex 23,10-11 anknüpfend in Lev 25,2-7 der soziale Aspekt des Schuldenerlasses zurückgestellt. Das Sabbatjahrgebot fungiert als Hauptgesetz für die folgenden Jubeljahrgebote und liefert den theologischen Begründungszusammenhang für die sozialen Bestimmungen. So entsteht eine Hierarchie von Begründungs- und Applikationsnormen. In der Begründungsfunktion des Privilegrechts knüpft der Redaktor mit dem Sabbatjahrgebot an das Brachejahrgebot des BB in Ex 23,10-11 an. Wird das Sabbatjahrgebot durch die Zweckbestimmung "für JHWH" (V. 2.4) konsequent mit JHWH verbunden, und werden entsprechend alle dem Menschen dienenden Abzweckungen des Dtn gestrichen, so werden die Aussonderungsbestimmungen des Jubeljahres durch "es ist ein Jubeljahr für euch" (V. 10.11.12) mit Israel verbunden und entsprechend die sozialen Funktionen auf das Jubeljahr konzentriert. Das Jubeljahrprogramm ist aus der Exegese von Dtn 15 und Ex 23,10-11 unter Aufnahme von Elementen des Vor- und Rückkaufsrechts von Grundstücken (Rut 4; Jer 32,6-15) sowie von Motiven königlicher *mīšarum*-Akte in Juda (Jer 34,18-22) in exilischer oder frühnachexilischer Zeit gestaltet worden. Den hermeneutischen Schlüssel zur Auslegung von Dtn 15 in Lev 25 liefert das BB. Das Gebot des Schuldenerlasses, das das BB nicht kennt, wird aus Dtn 15 nicht übernommen, dafür aber das Gebot des Brachejahres, das das Dtn nicht kennt, zum Hauptgebot des Jubeljahrprogramms gemacht. Eine Harmonisierung von Erlaßjahr- und Jubeljahrprogramm in der Form, daß das eine Programm für geringere, das andere für höhere Schulden zuständig sei, verwischt die theologische Dynamik in diesen Programmen, die erkennbar wird, wenn der ihnen zugrundeliegende Prozeß der Auslegung und Fortschreibung erkannt wird.

C. schließt mit der Erwägung, "that all three laws, and their related discussions of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years, could have been understood as a single comprehensive system of social welfare legislation" (354). Die Parallelen zu den altbabylonischen *mīšarum*-Edikten sollen für eine Datierung aller dieser Regelungen in die vorstaatliche oder staatlich-vorexilische Zeit sprechen. Dieses Ergebnis konnte nur um den Preis der Absehung von den literaturhistorischen Kontexten der Gesetze in BB, Dtn und Heiligkeitgesetz gewonnen werden. Nur eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Erfassung der jeweiligen Rechtssammlungen und eine überlieferungsgeschichtliche Analyse ihrer literarischen Relationen zueinander kann einen Fortschritt in der biblischen Rechtsgeschichte bringen. Die Grenze der vorliegenden Monographie liegt wohl nicht zuletzt darin, daß C. mit Akribie die Meinungen der Sekundärliteratur gesammelt, sich aber nicht gleichermaßen intensiv der Literaturgeschichte der analysierten Texte zugewendet hat.

Die Monographie wird mit einem umfangreichen Literaturverzeichnis und Registern abgeschlossen.

Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz
 Fachbereich Evangelische Theologie
 D-55099 Mainz

Eckart OTTO

Novum Testamentum

William S. KURZ, S.J., *Reading Luke-Acts: Dynamics of Biblical Narrative*. Louisville, Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993. x-261 p. 15 × 23

Fr. Kurz, of Marquette University (Milwaukee, USA), has set out to produce for a broad audience a book that shows how narrative-oriented literary critical methods can serve both the church and the academy. He succeeds. Behind this clear and accessible text stands much lucubration. In grappling with the application of several methods, K. has been able to avoid most jargon and technical short-hand while limiting his work to a modest size.

This project seeks safe passage between the Scylla of historical criticism, which yields a fragmented text at some distance from the readers, and the Charybdis of deconstruction, which dissolves meaning into a maelstrom of paradox. K's rather defensive response to deconstructionist criticism is perhaps *zu kurz*, but his essential argument, that scriptural texts arise in a communal rather than individual environments and reflect shared, traditional values rather than innovative ideas, is important. Moreover, K. implies, canonicity and "communities of reading" have effectively removed the sting of deconstruction, at least insofar as Christian reading of Luke and Acts are concerned. One may note that he is liable to the charge of excluding other possibilities or postures for reading. K. is also open to criticism for the narrowness of his "canon", which he restricts to Sacred Scripture (and possibly ecclesiastical creeds and teachings). It is possible to speak of the influence of Joyce and Proust upon Luke; those who have learned how to read modern literature are unlikely to discard all they have acquired when they turn to ancient texts.

Kurz's approach to the other potential danger, historical criticism, is more positive, for he views narrative analysis as a logical successor to redaction and composition criticism rather than a usurper of them, and he does not hesitate to employ redactional analysis. Historical criticism remains a necessary means of interpretation but should not be viewed as its end. This is to say that K. is a moderate advocate and practitioner of literary methods. Those engaged at the cutting edge of narrative exploration will find little stimulus here. At least some of K's reservations about literary methods are so apposite that they require either acceptance or refutation. Contemporary literary criticism has developed methods for the study of novelists who often seek to go against the grain and engage in experimentation rather than reinforce a conventional world-view. An excellent example is the "unreliable narrator", a creation of twentieth-century authors. It is most difficult to conceive of an omniscient narrator of the traditional type who is by intention not reliable. There is a difference between a willfully unreliable narrator and an author who has erred.

Thus K. argues for narrative stability in Luke and Acts, the products of a stable, if small, world, the firmness of which is further secured by its canonical context. His position is both strong and clear. The wider context

and boundaries provided by canonical are best understood as a *via media* between that harmonizing which effaces particularity and an either/or that establishes contradictions and demands a choice between the two (162-163). One issue K. does not fully address is that the very concept of Luke-Acts as a single work is essentially anti-canonical, since the canon divides these books.

The author understands that literary criticism is of little value if it simply confirms the results of historical criticism or supports the impressions of unreflective reading. K. therefore seeks to demonstrate that his narrative analysis can both supply new insights and help resolve long standing problems. His major means is examination of the "narrators" of Luke and Acts, an enterprise that embraces methods of narration, including "gaps". (In contemporary literary criticism "gaps" are important. All writings contain gaps, which readers fill in to construct the text — and some critics single out to deconstruct the text.) In general Luke and Acts use the common biblical technique of "omniscient narration", which permits a narrator to penetrate walls and even minds. Today this technique belongs solely to the realm of fiction. In the case of Luke and Acts the observation is explosive, for it distinguishes the narrator of the prefaces, who is subject to ordinary human limitations, from the narrator of much of the text, who is not so circumscribed. Although K. notes this distinction, he does not pursue its implications. Narrative analysis reveals that one cannot determine the genre(s) of Luke and Acts simply by reference to their allegedly historiographical prefaces.

Focus upon the narrator(s) substitutes for often uncontrollable conjectures about the "author" clear observations about how the story is told. *Reading Luke-Acts* is replete with the positive insights and advantages of this approach, which both elucidates and integrates the text. Through attention to what the narrators must explain or define one may develop a profile of the "ideal implied readers" of the text by reference to what they are supposed to know. Attention to narrative mode and content can also provide clues to emphasis, including "implicit commentary", by which the narrator indicates the relative significance of John and Jesus through interlacing the narratives of their origins (Luke 1-2), or exposes truth through irony, as in the speech of Gamaliel (Acts 5,35-39), or in the frequent references to or exposures of misunderstanding by disciples or others. Narrative analysis highlights changes of subject or the introduction of unexpected material. A notorious example of the former is the use of "we" in Acts. K. cites the surprisingly harsh introduction of Isa 6,9-10 in Acts 28,26-28 as an issue informing debates about the close of Acts (although he does not himself come to a conclusion [153-155]).

The commendable object of clarity can have drawbacks. For this reader the constant sub-heading "Narrators in..." was sometimes disconcerting, particularly when the section apparently featured a single narrator. K's use of the distinction between "showing" and "telling" is not sharp. In traditional terms a telling narrator will assert "Polonius is a hypocrite", while a showing narrator will report his words and indicate his actions, leaving the obvious conclusion to the reader. Much of the narration of

Luke and Acts proceeds by showing. Simon (Acts 8,9-24), for example, is never overtly condemned; he emerges as a mistaken and possibly misguided person exhibiting purpose of amendment. Telling plays an important role in positive religious characterization, as with Elizabeth and John (Luke 1,6) Cornelius (Acts 10,2), and Gamaliel (Acts 5,34).

The case of Saul is more complex. The narrative offers a neutral introduction (Acts 7,58), then exposes Saul's point of view and utter lack of restraint (8,1a.3). Saul's transformation into a persecutor is no less sudden and surprising than his conversion. K. notes (84) that by interweaving the entrance of Saul with Stephen's prayer for forgiveness the narrative prepares the way for the former's change. Acts 7,58-8,2 ably illustrates the contrast between redaction and narrative criticism. Redaction critics note the tension between 7,58 and 8,2 and observe seams. Literary critics look for narrative development. One of the merits of this book is its implicit recognition that both may be correct. Where the redaction critic seeks to expose tension and contradiction, the literary critic is more likely to find continuity. Without composition and redaction critics the biblical enterprise is in danger of being returned wholesale to harmonizers and apologists, who will now be able to veil their aims under the mantle of literary criticisms.

K. wisely asserts that canonicity brings a tendency toward harmonization. His application of this principle toward the filling in of gaps in the narration is open to occasional objection. Although K. wishes to operate from the perspective of the intended original readers, he may demand of them more knowledge than is likely. At times this means of filling gaps can work toward the detriment of the particular and unique value of each particular book. For example, on p.18 K. states that "...Most readers would have known about John's baptism of Jesus before reading the Lukan Gospel..." and would consequently presume "...That John baptized Jesus in the Jordan". In my view this kind of reading discourages the discovery of originality. In any case it is far from certain that Luke's readers were generally familiar with a number of gospels or traditions, and it is rather apparent that the third evangelist sought to correct some of these (Luke 1,1-4).

The "we" narrator of Acts is the subject of an entire chapter (111-124). In the course of a lucid presentation of problems and theories K. claims that his narrative orientation provides some resolution to this quandary. S. M. Praeder (*NT* 29 [1987] 193-218) identified four outstanding issues: anonymity, plurality, restriction of first-person to certain sections, and the mixture of first and third persons. According to K. anonymity results from the desire to mark presence without asserting identity. Although he makes a good narrative case for this, it should be noted that anonymous first-person writing is linked to the problem of anonymous authorship of all of the Gospels and the Acts. Likewise plurality enables the narrator to "hide behind a crowd" (123). It is communal rather than individual. The limitation of "we" to certain sections of Acts marks "selective claims to the narrator's presence at only some Pauline episodes" (124). Moreover, the departure of the "we" leaves Paul alone for his

“passion”, as was Jesus. As for the mixture of first and third persons, there are difficulties, but also the revelation of different points of view.

This analysis is a helpful contribution. K.’s careful observation of the use and limits of “we” would seem to put paid to any theories that a separate “we-source” has been introduced into the text. In the end his narrative analysis moves him toward tentative historical conclusions, in accord with J. Fitzmyer (*Luke the Theologian* [New York 1989]). Fitzmyer suggests that the “we passages” reveal a Luke who was only engaged with Paul at widely separated periods of his career, and missed, as it were, the major controversies. The late second-century tradition identifying this evangelist as Luke has independent attestation in Irenaeus and papyrus Bodmer XIV. In fact, an Egyptian tradition identifying Luke as the author of Acts was already known from Clement (*Strom.* 5.12). Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 3.1) states that Luke was a “*sectator Pauli*” who wrote a book containing the gospel that Paul preached. A few paragraphs later that same Luke is a “follower and disciple of the apostles”, who, by 3.14, has become “inseparable” from Paul, demonstrated by reference to Acts 16–28. To subtract from this the claims that Luke knew Paul’s theology well and was inseparable from him is to remove all that Irenaeus found worthwhile, for the purpose of the tradition associating the Luke mentioned in some epistles with the author of Luke and Acts was to provide a weapon against Marcion.

Those interested in affirming the tradition must ask how much has been saved by retaining a Luke who was a companion of Paul but did not trouble himself to learn about the major struggles in which Paul was engaged. This conclusion certainly questions the character of the claims made in Luke 1,1–4. Furthermore, the “we” of Acts 27,1–28,16 approaches omniscience, especially in 27,38–44 and 28,4–6. K.’s conclusion that the information recorded there derives from “hindsight” (108, 117) is an historical rather than a narrative explanation.

Disagreements about some emphases or conclusions notwithstanding, W.J. Kurz has shown that narrative criticism can work in tandem with historical criticism toward the resolution of old questions and the exposure of new ones, and he has done this with admirable clarity and brevity. *Reading Luke-Acts* will serve as an excellent introduction to narrative methods for those who have been skeptical about them and as an example of the merits of blending literary and historical criticism.

2122 Sheridan Road
Evanston, IL 60201 USA

Richard I. PERVO

Sjef VAN TILBORG, *Imaginative Love in John* (Biblical Interpretation Series 2). Leiden–New York–Köln, E. J. Brill, 1993. VIII-264 p.

Il volume è inserito in una collana appena iniziata, che riguarda «the discussion or application of new methods of interpreting the Bible», è un libro affascinante per il metodo e disturbante per la spregiudicatezza con cui lo applica.

Che il tema dell'amore sia centrale nel NT e in particolare nel quarto vangelo (QV) specie nella seconda parte, come dimostrato dal Dodd, è un dato comune. Che sia un tema studiatissimo è pure noto. Perché allora un altro libro su un tema tanto frequentato? È con queste osservazioni che inizia l'A. e continua: «This, however, is true only to a certain extent. The connection with narratology in this study is like charting a new road in a virtually unknown terrain» (1). E lo ribadisce nel sommario conclusivo, muovendo un'accusa pesante alla maggioranza degli esegeti: «The majority of exegetes treat the Johannine Gospel as a text which can be read at random anywhere» (239). Ciò presuppone che il QV sia stato scritto non in modo unitario, ma «episodically». Egli accusa di questo tipo di lettura il metodo «dicorsivo» che considera il QV un discorso sulla cristologia (Ashton) o sulla verità (de la Potterie) o su altro; come pure il metodo storico, che considera il testo come un documento da cui si possono trarre informazioni o sul Gesù storico degli anni trenta o sulla comunità giovannea (Martyn, Brown e molti altri oggi). Stranamente però non nomina il metodo dell'analisi strutturale, che considera il testo come una unità organica strettamente connessa, e perciò analogo alla «narratologia», tanto più che per il QV vi sono a tale riguardo buone monografie, anche recenti (G. Mlakuzhyl, *The Christocentric Literary Structure of the Fourth Gospel* [Roma 1987]). La narratologia, usata dall'A. assume come punto di partenza che il QV è «a narrative which tells the history of a part of Jesus' life in Palestine in the thirties... The narrative reading... assumes that the Johannine text is a narrative and... it assumes that from the perspective of the author/narrator the text is meant to be understood as a narrative» (240). È quindi una lettura legittima anche se non è l'unica plausibile, «but an option made in favour of the narrative reading has far-reaching consequences for the interpretation of the text» (ibid.). Nel suo progetto perciò egli considera il QV come una «narrazione» in cui «l'amore diviene reale in modo narrativo». Non si prendono in considerazione le parole e la concezione dell'agape, ma il modo in cui l'amore prende forma narrativa. L'osservazione critica nei riguardi dell'approccio filologico-concettuale è giusta. Io stesso ho osservato come negli «Atti» non compaiano mai i termini *agapê* ed *agapan*, ma l'amore viene raccontato, e talora in forma intensa, in tutta la narrazione.

Ma anche l'analisi narratologica non è unica. Anche al QV sono applicati diversi tipi di analisi narratologica, di cui il più noto è forse quello praticato da Culpepper (peraltro contestato da Carson nel suo recente commento al QV). Il metodo del nostro A. si precisa ulteriormente come «narratively imaginative», cioè «when — of course within a certain narratological framework —, the narrative realisations within a concrete text are

being viewed as an imaginatively realised figure, placed beside other imaginatively possible figures. The concrete love story is considered a selection from many other love stories, as a narrative-factual love story among the many love stories possible» (241). Proprio per avere un'idea chiara di questo immaginario l'A. usa il «codice biografico», cioè la concreta costellazione della famiglia di Gesù, al cui centro starebbe il rapporto col discepolo amato. Tale modello viene confrontato con un altro modello sia antico (rapporto del maestro con un discepolo favorito che ne sarà l'erede) sia moderno (la costellazione familiare analizzata dalla psicanalisi freudiana). L'A. scopre che il modello di relazioni familiari di Gesù è quasi unico se si confronta con le «storie» narrate nel I secolo, mentre sarebbe vicino al modello freudiano di un ambiente familiare che favorirebbe il sorgere dell'omosessualità (53-57). Qual è questa costellazione? «In the imaginary world of the Johannine Gospel Jesus finds himself in a particular family situation. He has a unique relationship with his mother, a non-relation with his father, a conflictual relationship with his brothers and sisters, and a extremely close and intensively described relationship with his "father who sent him" and who, narratively speaking, exists only in Jesus' imagination» (242). Mi sono dilungato nel presentare il modello metodologico, perché è lo specifico di questo studio.

La *struttura* della ricerca è la logica conseguenza del modello interpretativo. In un primo capitolo si delinea la costellazione dell'amore familiare di Gesù: madre influente, padre assente, relazione critica con fratelli e sorelle (per i quali è un 'alieno'), forte relazione col Padre immaginario (Padre-Signore di una casa, dove abiteranno i discepoli; Padre-re e Padre-educatore); nella contrapposizione fra nascita naturale e «dall'alto», esaltazione del codice maschile su quello femminile (53); modello non presente nel mondo antico, ma nella cultura psicanalitica contemporanea, ove, anche se non necessariamente, orienterebbe verso un «omosessuale» (53-57). Nei capitoli seguenti si esce dalla cerchia familiare per studiare un comportamento di Gesù, vicino a un modello dell'antichità classica quasi istituzionalizzato, la *paidēra*: il rapporto fra il maestro (*erastēs*) e un suo discepolo (*erōmenos*), confidente ed erede (59). Il rapporto fra Gesù e il discepolo amato viene anticipato da quello di Giovanni (Battista) con Gesù: lui maestro, più anziano, è paragonato al paraninfo che porta alle nozze il suo discepolo. Qual è il modello culturale del rapporto di Gesù col discepolo amato? Qui l'A. si dilunga nell'illustrare la concezione dell'amicizia in ambiente classico e soprattutto l'amore speciale di un maestro per un suo discepolo, che ne continuerà scuola e pensiero. Se vi sono esempi di rapporti stretti fra un maestro e un suo discepolo particolare anche in ambiente ebraico del I secolo (83-85), tuttavia i paralleli più significativi ai testi giovannei sul discepolo amato sarebbero quelli, narrati da Diogene Laerzio, sulla successione nell'accademia platonica. L'A. concede che ci portano fuori del I secolo al III a. C.: «Even though the historical position may not be all that strong, I want to refer explicitly to them because they run parallel in many ways with what Johannine texts says about Jesus and his beloved disciple» (85). E così si arriva all'analisi dei testi sul discepolo amato, nuova ed interessante

rispetto a quella usuale nell'esegesi. Il codice principale di lettura è quello erotico-sessuale anche se inteso nel senso dell'amore. La conclusione è che, mentre Giovanni Battista è attivo nei confronti di Gesù, il contrario avviene fra Gesù e il discepolo amato: Gesù è attivo; ma il discepolo amato diviene attivo dopo la morte di Gesù come *kyrios* di sua madre, suo successore e figlio adottivo, e come testimone privilegiato dell'amore di Gesù. Nel caso di Giovanni Battista viene attribuito a Gesù un matrimonio, ma in seconda battuta, in quanto è così interpretato da Giovanni stesso, mentre l'amicizia di Gesù col Discepolo Amato (DA) è una realtà raccontata. Il comportamento di Gesù nel codice del suo tempo era espressione di amore (109).

Dopo aver esaminato questa relazione centrale, modello delle altre, perfino di quella di Gesù col Padre immaginario, si passa ad esaminare i rapporti di Gesù con i discepoli amici, cui si estende l'amore di amicizia col DA; quindi l'amore per alcune donne, aperto e libero all'inizio ma riservato alla fine e messo in secondo piano rispetto ai discepoli e in particolare al DA (in Gv 20); il rapporto con altri uomini amati, i guariti, porta i nemici di Gesù ad una opposizione sempre più grande fino a voler uccidere Lazzaro.

L'ampio sommario finale riassume molto bene sia la metodologia sia i risultati della ricerca, con una riflessione ermeneutica conclusiva: «The Johannine gospel... pictures a value, which is of certain importance in the modern discussion on love and love relationships. That Jesus loves people is not an abstract sentence. His love is embedded in a pattern of relationships of different kinds. His love for the one, anonymous beloved disciple is the centre of his affective life. It is a preferential love, which colours all other relationships: the relationship with his mother, his father, his disciples, with women and men as well. In the opinion of the writer this beloved disciple is even the author of the book as the guarantee for the narrative told. I suppose that there is no greater authority for the value, appreciated by God and Jesus, of this and similar love stories» (252). Una selezione bibliografica e l'indice degli autori conclude l'opera.

Come valutare una tale ricerca, di cui sarebbe troppo lungo elencare le novità? Va detto anzitutto che l'A. dimostra una straordinaria conoscenza diretta e critica sia delle fonti antiche sia della ricerca psicanalitica moderna. Allarga in tal modo il campo storico-culturale con cui confrontare il QV. D'altronde l'analisi narrativa riesce a mettere in luce aspetti nuovi per quanto riguarda la madre di Gesù, influente, l'amore scambievole, la lavanda dei piedi in cui i discepoli sono considerati ospiti, la stessa analisi dei testi sul DA, i discepoli, le donne e gli uomini, per citarne solo alcuni. Il codice euristico della costellazione familiare in chiave psicanalitica domina molte pagine e può disturbare. Però l'analogia e la trascendenza che implica non deve far dimenticare la base di fenomenologia antropologica, ad esempio l'amore delle donne per Gesù. Rimane aperto il problema del genere di amore, che mi sembra quanto meno ambiguo, nonostante gli sforzi chiarificatori del van Tilborg.

Le riserve sono molte. Ne elenco brevemente alcune: 1. Anzitutto non son d'accordo che il padre di Gesù sia assente; Gesù «figlio di Giuseppe» è ricordato due volte nel QV (1,45; 6,42), mentre non è ricordato affatto in

quello di Marco, e in Mt e Lc solo nei rispettivi racconti dell'infanzia. Rimane vero che è assente dai discorsi di Gesù, mentre vi è presentissimo il «Padre che l'ha mandato». E tuttavia su questo punto la situazione fondamentale è la stessa che nei vangeli sinottici. 2. Il modello culturale classico di confronto che l'A. porta per il rapporto Gesù-DA è discutibile per diversi motivi: a) anzitutto l'epoca cui risalgono gli esempi portati (III secolo a. C.); b) in secondo luogo il fatto che mai nel QV, e in tutto il NT si usa la terminologia *eraô-erôs*, mentre i rapporti nella *paiderastia* sono di *erotês--erômenos*; c) è rischioso applicare a Gesù un comportamento condannato nel NT e nella tradizione cristiana antica come pagano, per quanto si idealizzi e per quante precisazioni si facciano; d) sembra, almeno in parte, un tributo alla nostra cultura «erotica». 3. La diversità fra i due modelli è evidente. Quello di Gesù è espresso pubblicamente, in un gruppo di amici; è orientato a quella valutazione trascendente (nascita da Dio), che relativizza l'amore naturale e critica qualsiasi altro amore che si chiuda nella cerchia di due. Il discepolo amato lo è perché ha una missione particolare nei confronti della sua comunità e, per mezzo di essa, nei confronti del mondo: dare la vita per mezzo della fede in Gesù. Dubito perciò che il modello dell'amore immaginativo del QV, realizzato da Giovanni, da Gesù e dal DA, sia l'ideale classico della *paiderastia*: «the paidagogic love which is the source of divine knowledge and love of God» (246). 4. L'esegesi è talora guidata dal principio euristico, anche se sempre molto vigile; si veda l'interpretazione di *en tē kolpē* di Gv 13,23 (cf. 1,18) nel senso del rapporto sessuale uomo/donna e donna/uomo alle pp. 88-90.

Concludendo, per l'esegesi giovannea, si potrebbe dire: 1. Anzitutto che l'analisi narrativa va integrata nell'esegesi attuale, ovviamente in modo critico; il QV va considerato in primo luogo una narrazione; ma non va dimenticato che è anche un discorso che intende condurre ad una conclusione logica (20,30-31). 2. Sono legittimi i vari livelli di lettura: storico-letteraria, discorsivo-teologica, narratologica ecc., purché si rispetti il testo e non lo si forzi a dire quanto vogliamo. 3. L'analisi narratologica non può mai dimenticare, non solo la lettura filologica, ma anche quella storica. Mi chiedo infatti se si possono avvicinare modelli storicamente e culturalmente così lontani, mentre nell'ambiente giudaico se ne possono trovare altri; ad esempio un personaggio in cui influisce la madre e il padre è assente, mentre almeno all'inizio i suoi gli sono ostili, è Mosè, una figura primaria nello stesso QV. 4. Infine va detto che in un'esegesi globale dovrebbero essere integrate le varie letture, anche questa del van Tilborg, veramente suggestiva per tanti versi, ma, per altri, anche molto problematica.

M. HENGEL, *Die johanneische Frage. Ein Lösungsversuch mit einem Beitrag zur Apokalypse von Jörg Frey* (WUNT 67). Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1993. 490 S. DM 168,—

The literature on the Johannine corpus continues to flourish, but until the appearance of this volume it could have been claimed that the discussion of "the Johannine question" had been laid to rest. Once scholarly decisions on this question were the touchstone of orthodoxy, but many recent scholars dedicate their energies to the rediscovery of the various editions, literary strata, sources, and (at times conflicting) theological perspectives which have somehow produced a gospel shot through with *Aporien*. For this tradition of scholarship, one cannot speak of an "author" in the strict sense. At the other extreme, contemporary literary approaches to the Fourth Gospel stress the unity of the present state of the narrative. Scholars of this tradition are more concerned with an *implied author* in the text, whose point of view unifies the narrative, addressing both the implied reader in the text, and the real reader of the text.

Hengel opens his study with a re-reading of a possible Johannine *Wirkungsgeschichte* in the second century. Irenaeus writes unequivocally of the link between the Fourth Gospel, the Beloved Disciple and John, the Son of Zebedee, but what of the earlier years of the second century? Slight though they may be, traces of the Johannine tradition can be found across a large part of second-century Christian writing, especially in the Churches of Asia Minor. Papias' list of the disciples indicating a dependence upon John 1, his insistence upon the superiority of the ζῶσα φωνὴ καὶ μένουσα, probably a Johannine expression, and his attribution of the Johannine corpus to ὁ πρεσβύτερος Ἰωάννης, show that he had contacts with the Johannine tradition and its founding figure. A study of 2 and 3 John indicates that they belong to the same author, and emerge from the same *Sitz im Leben* as 1 John where the same author issues strong warning to his community against a Christology which does not take the union of the human and the divine in Jesus as central to Christian belief. The letters are the work of an authoritative "John the Elder" (named explicitly as such in 2 John 1; 3 John 1). The community is threatened by false teachings which come from outside the community (see 1 John 4,1), and this has already led to some desertions from among the members of the community (see 1 John 2,19). This is not only — or not even primarily — an *inner-community* problem. The Elder is not correcting an emerging docetism which had its birth in the community's Gospel. Indeed, there are no indications within the Letters that that Gospel existed when they were written. It is more likely that the Letters reflect a spontaneous response of the Elder to the dangers of external influences which were threatening the christological beliefs of his community. The Letters reflect an earlier stage (60/70's) in the Elder's authoritative direction and instruction of the community. The longer process of the emerging Gospel was in progress, but not yet completed.

The Fourth Gospel was called εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Ἰωάννην as soon as it was published (90/100) in its final form by the Johannine school which

shows no trace of existing as a unique Christian sect either before or after the appearance of its literature. The message of the Gospel (and the Letters) is a unique, personal, but traditional, statement of the Christian tradition concerning God, Jesus and the salvation of the human situation through the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Son of God. Hengel surveys the many explanations for the fragmentary nature of the present text, and counterclaims that the brief period during the Gospel was composed, the unity of the style and language, and the questionable nature of hypotheses concerning the history of the Johannine community all point to the essential literary and theological unity of the Fourth Gospel. The regular appearance of the name "John" in priestly families of Jerusalem, the semitised Greek, the knowledge of Palestinian geography, Israel's feasts and customs, all indicate a Jewish *Heimat* for the Elder. Never does the Christology of the Fourth Gospel need to be explained by gnostic or Hellenistic models. The increasing divinisation of the Christ evident in the Fourth Gospel can be shown as having its background in Jewish speculation. But the debate with "the Jews" is a thing of the past, and the *birkat ha-minim* is a consequence of a longer conflict, having no direct bearing on the Johannine situation. The polemic against "the Jews" is central to the Gospel because of the story of Jesus, but the author has no interest in a Jewish audience. The Gospel was written for a Gentile audience, most probably at Ephesus. "The Jews" represent all non-believers.

John the Elder was not one of the Twelve, but John, a member of a priestly family from Jerusalem. He knew Jerusalem well, and wrote an "aristocratic" work, with little or no concern for the poor and suffering. His priestly and wealthy background explain the unnamed disciple of 18,15 as a γυνῶστος τοῦ ἀρχιερέως. Born about 15 AD, a person named "John", from a priestly family, became a passionate follower of Jesus of Nazareth, and probably had close associations with John, the son of Zebedee (who was martyred sometime between 50 and 70 AD) and Philip (see 1,43-46; 6,5-7; 12,21-22; 14,8-10) who also appears to have been well known in the Church of Asia Minor. The confusion which marked the first years of the Jewish War, from 66 AD, following hard upon the slaying of James and other Jewish Christians in 62 AD, led John (now about 50 years old) and Philip to flee into Asia Minor. John became "John the Elder", the venerable founding figure of a community, the Beloved Disciple who wrote the Gospel (see 21,24). Quite early in his presence in Ephesus the Elder was exiled for a time to the island of Patmos, another sign of his seniority and dignity in the eyes of civil authority. It was probably about this time (not in the 90's, as Irenaeus claims, but in the late 60's or early 70's) that the three Letters of John were written, and it is the memory of Patmos which stands behind the association of the Elder, the exile and the Apocalypse. The Gospel appeared towards the end of the century, and from its first appearance, was known as the Gospel according to John, rightly credited to "John", by now regarded as "the Elder", even though there were some minor redactional touches and glosses added to it (e.g. ch.21) before it appeared. John the Elder, who had done his best to hide his name from his readers as he told his story, was identified with John the son of Zebedee by

about the middle of the second century. This is the tradition made canonical through the authority of Irenaeus.

Jorg Frey's lengthy appendix (326-429) provides an up-to-date survey of scholarly debate and his own conclusions on the major issues behind all attempts to situate the Apocalypse within the Johannine Corpus. An analysis of parallel key expressions, the use of parallel conjunction, adverbs, prepositions, pronouns and participles show links, but they are not as close as (for example) the parallels between the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. The links may be caused by something other than a common author. The case is somewhat different with the common use of certain expressions (e.g. the use of τηρεῖν, λαμβάνειν, πεπληρωμένος, ποιεῖν, μέρος ἔχειν, etc.) which create "a strong presumption of affinity" (H. B. Swete), and this leads Frey into a thorough comparison of the style and syntax of the Gospel and Letters with that of the Apocalypse. Frey admits that the unique and uniform style of the Apocalypse may indicate diversity of authorship between this document and the rest of the Johannine corpus. Yet parallel theological motives remain: bride, mother, light, door, Logos, witness, shepherd, the exalted crucified one, the Temple, the Spirit as witness. A study of the common themes of "living water", Jesus' self-identification as ἐγὼ εἰμι, the sharing of the throne by the Lamb and God, and the mutual indwelling of Father and Son, the christological use of the Logos title, and the presentation of the "Antichrist" in the Apocalypse and the Letters cause Frey to suggest that the Apocalypse is from the Johannine school, but from another hand, written before both Gospel and Letters. "John the Elder" has shifted away from an apocalyptic form, determined by a Christology of the pre-existent Logos, and the increasing divinisation of the Christ. Problems still remain unresolved (see 415-418), but however difficult Frey's suggestion concerning the tradition history of the Apocalypse within the Johannine school, he regards it as at least more likely than the claim that there is no contact between the Apocalypse and the rest of the Johannine corpus.

Frey's rich study deserves attention, and should become an important point of reference for all future discussion of the place of the Apocalypse within the Johannine Corpus. However, for the purposes of this review I will limit my remarks to an assessment of Hengel's study. The thoroughness of the argument, the respect for tradition, and the consideration of both primary and secondary literature merit serious consideration. Historically, I have no problem with the possibility of a disciple who was not one of the Twelve being the Beloved Disciple, in some way (not as directly as Hengel's proposal) the author of the Fourth Gospel. But problems remain. A crucial question is the role of "the Jews" in the Gospel, and the total absence of conflict between the community and "the Jews" in the Letters. Hengel would respond that "the Jews" were *never* a problem for the Johannine community. They were part of the literary form of the Gospel, but not of the Letters. On the one hand the author and his Gospel are Jewish, but on the other, the Gospel was written for Gentile Christians in Asia Minor. What of the presence of a Jewish community in Ephesus? How did the Johannine community relate to their ex-compatriots, struggling to establish

their new identity after the disaster of 70 AD, just as early Christianity was struggling to establish its identity? "The Jews" cannot be identified simply with all non-believers, as many of the people in the Johannine community would have been "Jews", just as many other people in Ephesus would have been "Jews". On this question alone, I remain of the persuasion that the Gospel, with its threefold use of ἀποσυνάγωγος 9,22; 12,42; 16,2), preceded the Letters, which reflect a period when the question of "the Jews" was indeed a problem of the past.

Hengel firmly rejects the possibility of discovering the history of the Johannine community or its developing Christology, but a history of John the Elder is attempted. Despite loyalty to tradition (Ephesus, John the Elder, the flight to Pella, etc.), Hengel is cavalier in his rejection of Irenaeus on the presence of the Elder in Patmos in the 90's, opting for late Neronian or early Flavian dating for this exile. His regular use of the other Gospels, especially Mark, which (following a tradition made classical by Augustine) Hengel regards as the Elder's anti-Gospel, and his use of Paul to show the way in which the Elder is developing directly from the authentic Christian tradition, creates the impression that the authentic Christian tradition ran from Jesus to Paul, to Mark, Matthew, Luke and John along a broad, open road. But the uniqueness of the Johannine perspective should be read and understood on its own merits. Hengel has an unfortunate way of mocking the work of scholars who have proposed hypotheses, perhaps best summed up in words of which he cites from W. C. van Unnik: "In New Testament scholarship what true is is not new and what new is is not true" (3, n.4). Hengel's hypothesis could claim to be "new", and may also fall under the condemnation of van Unnik's words.

Does this search for the historical "John" help us to understand better the world behind the text, in the text, and in front of the text? Hengel's textual explorations are consistently, and necessarily, a search for some trace of a figure who did his best to keep his own person and experience out of the story, so that the Gospel could have a life of its own. Would it not be wiser to leave things that way?

Australian Catholic University
P.O. Box 968
North Sydney
N.S.W. 2059 Australia

Francis J. MOLONEY, SDB

Varia

Christopher BEGG, *Josephus' Account of the Early Divided Monarchy* (AJ 8,212-420); *Rewriting the Bible* (BETL 108). Leuven, University Press, 1993. IX-377 p. 16 × 24,5. BF 2400

This is a model work of the most careful scholarship, analyzing most responsibly and in remarkable detail the portion of Josephus' *Antiquities* which parallels 1 Kings 12-22 and 2 Chronicles 10-18. Begg proceeds word

by word, with the most commendable caution and restraint, noting in the most precise way every change, whether addition, subtraction, or modification made by Josephus (citing all significant variants in the manuscript tradition) as compared with the Hebrew, Septuagint, proto-Lucianic, and Targum texts. But Begg does not stop there, as useful as such a catalogue is. He attempts to determine the reasons for and the effects of Josephus' changes. Though Begg, in his characteristic modesty, insists that his conclusions are merely provisional, since they are based on an analysis of only half of one book of Josephus' twenty-book *œuvre*, there can be doubt that scholarship as conscientious and as judicious as Begg's goes a long way toward answering the question as to Josephus' aims in rewriting the Bible.

Begg's major conclusions, borne out by the present reviewer's study of portraits of various biblical personalities in Josephus, are: (1) Josephus fully and intimately integrates his biblical sources (here Kings and Chronicles); (2) in opposition to the view of many scholars, who argue that for this part of the *Antiquities* Josephus' relied virtually exclusively upon the Septuagint, Begg finds that in a number of instances Josephus used a Semitic-language source; (3) as for Josephus' Greek biblical text, despite the *communis sensus* that Josephus here relied upon a proto-Lucianic text, Begg notes a number of instances where Josephus agrees with the Codex Vaticanus of the Septuagint against both the Hebrew and the proto-Lucianic versions; (4) in a number of instances Josephus agrees with the Targumim (and occasionally with the Talmudim and Midrashim) against the other versions; (5) Josephus' omissions of biblical data are chiefly due to his concern not to bore his readers and to avoid embarrassing passages; (6) Josephus' terminological modifications are prompted either by the language of the Targum or by the fact that a given term has come to be used with a different meaning outside of the Septuagint; (7) his stylistic changes are intended to lend greater elegance to the narrative than is found in the Septuagint; (8) many of Josephus' additions are, in effect, footnotes to explain matters in the text which would not be clear to his primarily non-Jewish audience; (9) occasionally, to add credibility to his account, Josephus incorporates excerpts from non-Jewish authors to confirm and supplement information in the Bible; (10) some additions are intended either to remind the reader of previous episodes or to foreshadow subsequent ones; (11) Josephus adds psychological analyses of his characters; (12) Josephus presents editorial-like political, moral, and theological reflections. On the whole, however, Josephus is a faithful reteller of the biblical narrative, in accordance with his pledge (*Antiquities* 1.17) not to add to or omit anything from the biblical account, his aim being primarily to provide the reader with a smoother-reading, more readily comprehensible, less ambiguous, and less problematic account.

The present reviewer would add one dimension to this excellent book, namely that Josephus, in his rewriting of the Bible, is often autobiographical and commenting upon the current scene. We may see this, for example, in this portion, in Josephus' version of Jeroboam, where his description of

him (*Ant.* 8.209) as θερμός (“hot-blooded”, “passionate”, “violent”, “hasty”) would remind readers that hot-headedness was the defining characteristic of the Jewish revolutionaries against Rome. Thus, this same word is used (*War* 4.292) of the Zealots who plunged boldly into the heart of the city of Jerusalem and opened the gates to their allies, the Idumaeans. Again, he mentions that the revolutionaries thoughtlessly rushed into arms, their hands yet hot with the blood of their countrymen (*War* 5.491).

Another example is when Josephus (*Ant.* 8.245) declares that Jeroboam daily sought to commit some new act more heinous (μιαρώτερον, “more unclean”, “defiled [with blood]”, “horrible”, “outrageous”, “vile”) than the reckless acts of which he was already guilty. Josephus’ use of the word μιαρώτερον is significant, inasmuch as it frequently has the connotation of fraternal strife and murder, which, from Josephus’ point of view, was also the greatest sin of the revolutionaries in his own day. Thus, we may note Titus’ references to the revolutionaries as most abominable (μιαρώτατοι, *War* 6.124, 347). In particular, we may cite Josephus’ own editorial summary of the revolutionary groups, in which he refers to the Idumaeans as “those most abominable (μιαρώτατοι) wretches” (*War* 7.267).

That Josephus viewed Jeroboam as the prototype of the revolutionaries of his own day may be seen in Josephus’ extra-biblical remark that Jeroboam attempted to persuade the people to turn away (ἀφίστασθαι) and to start a revolt (κινεῖν) (*Ant.* 8.209). Indeed, the phrase which Josephus uses to describe Jeroboam’s sedition, that he was “ambitious of great things” (μεγάλων ἐπιθυμητῆς πραγμάτων, *Ant.* 8.209) is strikingly similar to that which he uses to describe the archrevolutionary John of Gischala, that he was always ambitious of great things (ἀει... ἐπιθυμήσας μεγάλων, *War* 2.587). Those who responded to John’s invitation are similarly depicted as always ambitious for newer things (νεωτέρων ἐπιθυμοῦντες αἰεὶ πραγμάτων, *Life* 87), addicted to change and delighting in sedition. Josephus employs similar language in describing his archrival Justus of Tiberias as “ambitious for never things” (νεωτέρων... ἐπεθύμει πραγμάτων, *Life* 36).

Furthermore, when Josephus (*Ant.* 9.282) points his finger at Jeroboam’s lawlessness (παρανομίαν), this is the very quality which he denounces in the revolutionaries, particularly in his bitter attack on the Sicarii (*War* 7.262), as the first to set the example of lawlessness (παρανομίας) and cruelty to their kinsmen. Moreover, to the Romans, who had such a deep and long-standing reverence for law and who were so proud of their legal tradition, such an attack on Jeroboam for his lawlessness would be devastating.

We may also add — a point noted by Begg (183, n.1209) but about which he is hesitant — that a key feature in Josephus’ remolding of the character of Elijah is his elimination of the features of a Zealot. This was especially necessary, inasmuch as, in the popular tradition, Elijah was regarded as the forerunner of the Messiah, who, by definition, would establish an independent Jewish state, a situation which could come about, in Josephus’ own day, only through overthrowing the yoke of the Romans. Thus, when, according to the biblical version (1 Kgs 19,14), the still small

voice asks Elijah what he is doing, he replies that he has been very zealous (*qānē' qinnē'îl*) for the Lord. He then, zealot that he is, bitterly proceeds to indict the people of Israel as having forsaken the covenant, thrown down God's altars, and slain the prophets. All this is omitted in Josephus' version (*Ant.* 8.352). In Josephus the divine voice exhorts the prophet not to be alarmed and assures him that none of his enemies will succeed in getting him within their power.

Likewise, the picture of Elisha that emerges from the Bible is of a fiery prophet who is, in this respect, a worthy successor to his mentor Elijah. He has all the characteristics of a zealot revolutionary; but whereas Elijah is identified in the rabbinic tradition with Phinehas, Elisha is not; and hence Josephus, like the rabbis, felt free to mould him as a gentler figure. Thus, in the Bible (1 Kgs 19,17) God tells Elijah that Jehu will kill those who escape the sword of King Hazael and that Elisha would kill those who escape the sword of Jehu. This prophecy is missing in Josephus' paraphrase (*Ant.* 8.352) not only because we find no later reference to such slaying by Elisha but also because Josephus seeks to mould Elisha in a gentler light. Josephus also (*Ant.* 8.352) omits the gory scene (1 Kgs 19,21), at the time when Elisha is called by Elijah, where Elisha took the yoke of oxen, slaughtered them, and boiled their flesh. Indeed, it is significant that in his extra-biblical eulogy for Elisha Josephus (*Ant.* 9.182) remarks that he was held in honor by God. The verb that is here used for "held in honor", σπουδασθείς, means "to pursue with zeal". Far from showing this zeal, as the revolutionaries did in Josephus' own day, Elisha is thus depicted as being the recipient of it from God.

In one of his relatively rare editorial comments, Josephus (*Ant.* 8.409) goes out of his way not to blame the wicked king Ahab for listening to the false prophet. Rather, he says, "It was Fate, I suppose, that prevailed and made the false prophet more convincing than the true one, in order to hasten Ahab's end". We may guess that the emphasis on the fact that Ahab had been deceived by the false prophets reflects Josephus' commentary on contemporary affairs and, in particular, on the misleading of the rebels against Rome by their revolutionary leaders and on the failure of the true prophets — most notably, of course (at least in his own eyes), Josephus himself — to dissuade the people from following these false leaders.

Furthermore, just as Josephus, aware of the political implications, placed less emphasis on God's promise of Palestine to Abraham, so we see Josephus' care in omitting land theology in the pericope of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah. Thus, while in the Bible (2 Chr 20,11) the land has been given to the Israelites by God as an inheritance, in Josephus' version (*Ant.* 9.9) the central focus is not on the land but on the Temple (which, of course, was the central concern to Josephus the priest); in other words, Josephus has converted a political gift of God to a religious one. To be sure, he does mention the land, but it is not as an inheritance to be an independent state but rather as a dwelling place.

The underlying theme of Josephus' *Jewish War* is to emphasize (*War* 1.10) that the responsibility for the ill-fated revolt was the civil strife

engendered by the Jewish "tyrants". Jehu, it would seem, was also guilty of lawlessness in rebelling against the king Joram of his nation, Israel; and Josephus was clearly in a quandary as to how to differentiate between this rebellion and the civil strife which he so strongly condemned. It is significant, therefore, that the biblical account (2 Kgs 9,14) states that Jehu conspired against Joram, whereas in Josephus' version (*Ant.* 9.112) there is no mention of conspiracy, and we hear only that Jehu collected his army and prepared to set out against Joram. Again, whereas, after Ahab's sons had been slain, in accordance with Jehu's orders, Jehu (2 Kgs 10,9) admits to the people that it was he who had conspired against King Joram, Josephus (*Ant.* 9.129) omits the element of conspiracy and states merely that Jehu had marched against his master.

Josephus (*Ant.* 9.133), moreover, was careful not to give the impression, as does the Hebrew text (2 Kgs 10,16), that Jehu was a zealot, inasmuch as this might, of course, make him appear as a forerunner of the Zealots. Instead, Josephus puts a pious truism into the mouth of Jehu, when he tells Jonadab that it is the most desirable and pleasant of sights for a good and upright man to see the wicked punished, in keeping, we may add, with the moral lesson which Josephus (*Ant.* 1.14) preaches in the proem to his *Antiquities*, namely that people are rewarded and punished by God in accordance with the degree to which they conform or violate the laws revealed by God.

But let not these supplementary comments detract from this reviewer's admiration for the thorough, meticulous, and sound scholarship of this excellent study.

School of Historical Studies
Princeton, NJ 08540 USA

Louis H. FELDMAN

Louis H. FELDMAN, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World. Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993. XII-679 p. 16 × 24

The dynamics of relations between different cultural, religious, and socio-economic groups are always complex and difficult to analyze exhaustively and evenhandedly. They are often similar to an equation with a near infinite number of variables. Such is the case of the relations between Jews and Gentiles. The study of these relations has long suffered from an excess of polemics and apologetics, so much so that between the 1950s and the mid-1980s few major attempts have been made to tackle the question of Jewish-Gentile relations in antiquity in a scholarly, non-polemical manner. This situation has changed drastically as evidenced by the more recent bibliography. In the subspecialty of Jewish proselytism alone, at least four books have appeared since 1990 (D. Piattelli, McKnight, Will and Orrieux, Feldman) and two more have been announced (Goodman, A.J. Levine and Pervo).

So far, F.'s work is the most voluminous and most thorough investigation of the subject. In 586 pages of text and lengthy endnotes F. offers a detailed, topically arranged overview. Secondly, the 11 main chapters also reflect a chronological division. A 30-page summary plus full bibliography and indices round out an impressive tome.

In chapter 1, F. renews the argument with Hengel about the depth of early Hellenistic influence on Palestinian Judaism. While not denying commercial and military interaction and some peripheral linguistic influence, F. argues that prior to the Hasmonean period "cultural contacts" between Greeks and Jews in the land of Israel were insignificant. He also tries to show against Hengel and a majority of scholars that Hellenism remained a limited factor right through the Talmudic era. Indeed, he asserts that

the archaeological evidence indicates that during the Hasmonaeen-Herodian period (150 B.C.E.-70 C.E.) the Jews were so completely under the spiritual domination of the Pharisees, who were so careful in the observance of both the written and oral law (Josephus, *Ant.* 18.12) that they refrained from any attempt at painting and sculpture, religious or secular, whereas after that date rabbinical control ceased to be as effective both in the Diaspora and in Palestine (39-40).

Evidently, F. is not afraid to move against the dominant currents in much recent scholarship and to draw bold conclusions based on disparate pieces of evidence. Unfortunately, he fails to show why it was precisely Pharisaic influence that caused, e. g., all Hasmonean rulers to use non-iconic coins.

In Chapter 2, F. deals with "the strength of Judaism in the Diaspora". Though acknowledging the overwhelming influence of the Greek language, F. argues that it did not automatically lead to a Greek way of thinking and that the Septuagint shows mostly "superficial and decorative" elements of Greek thought (52). Speaking of Egypt, F. even states (citing in support Green's *Alexander to Actium* [Berkeley 1990] 317) that "though the Jews were apparently living side by side with Greeks... the evidence reveals almost no direct contact between the two peoples, certainly in the third century B.C.E. and arguably for a much longer period of time" (56). F.'s evaluation is based primarily though not exclusively on literary sources and their lack of mutual references. Yet, when one looks at some of the Zenon Papyri and other documents, they support the opposite view. F. further reviews Jewish participation in Gentile cultural activities, especially sports and theater. Despite Philo's decidedly different view, F. argues that such participation implies deviation from Jewish "orthodoxy" (59, 62), a term which is shunned by other scholars dealing with this period. While acknowledging that deviation from Jewish law does not imply abandonment of or exclusion from the Jewish people, F. (correctly) sees intermarriage as dangerous to the Jewish community. Even though he is familiar with intermarriage in the Bible, and with Philo's mild attitude toward it, he considers it close to apostasy and comparatively rare (79, 422). Yet elsewhere he admits that "we may surmise that most proselytes during that period [2nd-3rd cent. CE?] were

the result of intermarriage" (382, cf. 402). It is true that few individual cases of intermarriage are attested in ancient sources (one might add the case of Timothy's parents in Acts 16,1). Yet, the frequency of intermarriage at least in the early centuries of Christianity may be deduced from the several imperial and ecclesiastical injunctions against it, which F. himself cites (388, 398, 583, n. 31, 39).

Chapters 3-5 deal with different aspects of anti-Judaism or antisemitism in antiquity. Among F.'s noteworthy findings are the relative rarity of anti-Jewish legislation and the perdurance of what he calls "the vertical alliance" of Jews with Ptolemaic, Seleucid, Roman, and other governments, an alliance that outlasted even the great Jewish revolts. F. further distinguishes between popular prejudice against Jews (chap. 4) and the (considerably less universal than often surmised) prejudice among ancient intellectuals (chap. 5).

In Chapter 6, F. begins to turn more directly to answer the question he had formulated at the outset:

How can we explain why the Jews in antiquity — so bitterly hated, as so many scholars have insisted — succeeded in winning so many adherents, whether as "sympathizers" who observed one or more Jewish practices or as full-fledged proselytes? (xi)

He considers the natural demographic increase incapable of accounting for the spread of Jewish communities in the Hellenistic and Roman periods and looks therefore for other explanations, namely "the attractions of the Jews" (chaps. 6-8). Among these their antiquity (chap. 6) and cardinal virtues (chap. 7) stand out, both embodied by Moses, the ideal leader (chap. 8). F. assigns much room to the virtues of Moses as described by Josephus (243-285, 433-435, 537-552; L. H. Feldman, "Josephus' Portrait of Moses", *JQR* 82 [1992] 285-328; 83 [1992-93] 7-50, 301-330). By contrast he devotes only one paragraph (316) plus several brief references to *Joseph and Asenath*, a work that deals specifically with the success of early Jewish proselytism, the subject of Chapter 9. In this, perhaps the most important and controversial part of the book, F. combs through the available evidence, to find answers to the why and how of the dramatic increase in the number of Jews throughout the Mediterranean world.

His initial argument, briefly stated but at first sight impressive, is as noted demographic. Following Baron, F. argues that the increase from a small pre-exilic Judaeon population of no more than 150,000 Jews to a worldwide Jewish population of about eight million in the first century CE needs explanation. "Only proselytism can account for this vast increase, though admittedly aggressive proselytism is only one possible explanation for the numerous conversions" (293). The rest of the chapter is devoted to marshalling any available evidence for such proselytism. F. searches first for the, admittedly meager, evidence for Jewish missionary activity. He then looks for cases of individual or collective proselytism and for reactions to such activity, including the several temporary expulsions of Jews from the city of Rome (139 BCE, and under the emperors Tiberius and Claudius), all caused by conversionary moves by Jews. Against Kasher and others he

accepts the accounts of forced conversions of Idumaeans and Ituraeans in the Hasmonaean period as basically trustworthy (324-326). He further deals with literary and oral means of conversion, among which he considers acquaintance with the Jewish Bible, especially in its Septuagint form, a major factor (310-316). Here one might usefully have consulted the *Biblia Gentium* which lists close to 300 pagan references to the Jewish Bible (G. Rinaldi, *Biblia Gentium*. A first contribution towards an index of Biblical quotations, references and allusions made by Greek and Latin heathen writers of the Roman imperial times [Rome 1989]).

In Chapter 10, F. deals with the phenomenon of the so-called "God-Fearers", which at least in the third century (contrary to his earlier stance) he accepts as a category separate from born Jews and proselytes, primarily on the basis of epigraphic evidence from Aphrodisias and elsewhere. He then draws up an instructive list of 31 factors that might have attracted non-Jews to Judaism in the third century CE. He describes social, political (no. 5!), religious, economic (nos. 11-15!) and other factors, but pointedly excludes intermarriage and its consequences (e.g., choice of the religious preference of one parent) from his list (370-381).

Chapter 11 deals with proselytism in the third to fifth centuries. Despite numerous restrictions and prohibitions, Judaism remained attractive to non-Jews, both pagan and Christian, until the fifth century and beyond. F. proves this from Roman imperial legislation, canons of Church councils, patristic literature (especially John Chrysostom!), rabbinic texts, as well as inscriptions and papyri.

The twelfth chapter is a summary of the preceding discussion, more than a set of conclusions as the title might suggest. Still it is useful at the end of such a large work to restate some of its major points.

In this review it is impossible to do justice to the wealth of material digested in F.'s *magnum opus*, the mature fruit of long reflection. Yet, as it should be with any work of such scope, it stimulates many questions, perhaps more than it answers.

First of all, the argument from demography, taken by F. as a given that needs practically no further discussion, may not be as strong as it seems. If Baron's figures for the Jewish population in antiquity are indeed correct — and there is no way of verifying whether Harnack's figure of four million was closer to the truth than Baron's eight million — they imply a doubling of the population about once every one hundred years. While other population at the same time stagnated or declined, such an increase, though impressive, is not beyond the realm of regular demographic developments, even in antiquity. Furthermore, though F. is too sophisticated to advocate a monocausal explanation (293), in fact he looks only to proselytism to account for it. As P. van Minnen has noted "Ohne die zahlenmässig eindrucksvolle Statistik, die Feldman als Hauptargument für den Proselytismus aufführt, verlieren die von ihm aufgeführten literarischen Zeugnisse ihre sinngebende Perspektive" (*ZPE* 100 [1994] 254). Thus the evidence for large-scale Jewish missionary activity remains extremely slim if not entirely dubious. F. adds somewhat to the imprecision of terminology when he states that "the fact that

Fulvia [an upper-class Roman proselyte] came to them [four Jews] regularly would indicate that they acted as missionaries, *perhaps on her initiative* [my italics], in converting her" (303). If the initiative was hers, there is no reason to call these charlatans missionaries according to common usage of that term.

In connection with the so-called persecution of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, F. accepts Tcherikover's thesis that "the struggle in Judaea should rather be viewed as a civil war between Jewish factions, each of whom sought to be more Hellenized than the other" (92). F. does not explain how all of a sudden *two* Hellenizing factions could appear in Jerusalem, with hardly any prior Hellenistic influence. The fact that the persecution of Antiochus IV lasted only for a few years does not address the question of inner-Jewish "Hellenization" that must have preceded the outbreak of such a civil war and that did continue unabated after the abrogation of Antiochus' sanctions (cf. 1 Macc 9,23-27).

F.'s references are generally accurate and excellently indexed, although the indices of sources also point up some repetition of material: e.g., the anecdote of Aristotle's encounter with a Jew in Asia Minor is cited 18 times. Such frequent use of the same material is at times explainable by the prior publication of separate parts of this work. In part, rather, these repeated citations indicate that F. tries to squeeze every last ounce of information out of the sometimes meager literary sources. Epigraphical and papyrological material is treated less thoroughly. E.g., there is no reference to the Babatha archive (N. Lewis, et al., *The Documents from the Bar-Kochba Period in the cave of Letters* [Jerusalem 1989]) or to G. Lüderitz and J.M. Reynolds, *Corpus jüdischer Zeugnisse aus der Cyrenaika* (Wiesbaden 1983). Generally, F.'s work is excellently produced and remarkably free of typographical or printing errors. On page 285 the reference to the Damascus Document lacks indication of col. 5.

One cannot be a specialist in all areas of late antiquity and it is particularly hard for a non-specialist to be aware of all the more recent trends in New Testament interpretation. Thus F. refers to Paul's alleged antinomianism (75) and lists Klausner (Engl. transl. 1943) as the only modern reference. Surely the question presents itself in a different light today than in Klausner's time.

From F.'s book emerges a picture of a Judaism that is not only vibrant, alive, and relatively unified, but also expanding, generally on good terms with government authorities, and even with Christian rulers and the faithful. This seems to be a rather optimistic picture, perhaps too optimistic, but a clear antidote against any "lachrymose" conception of Jewish history in late antiquity, including the early centuries under Christian Roman emperors. Feldman's monumental work, a *tour de force* in defence of a thriving, basically "orthodox", and not marginalized Judaism, will surely be read and studied with profit by anyone interested in Jewish-Gentile relations in antiquity, even though many will disagree with some of its conclusions.

Pontifical Biblical Institute
Via della Pilotta, 25
I-00187 Rome

Joseph SIEVERS

NUNTII PERSONARUM ET RERUM

Isaïe, Jérémie et la politique internationale de Juda *

Les prophètes bibliques et la politique, voilà un thème qui a été souvent traité par l'exégèse historico-critique⁽¹⁾. Il n'y a en cela rien de surprenant. Exprimée dans les termes de la modernité occidentale dont l'exégèse historico-critique est l'une des manifestations, l'activité des prophètes a une portée éminemment politique. Ce n'est d'ailleurs pas un trait propre au monde hébraïque, mais un élément commun aux prophétismes du Proche-Orient ancien connus, comme l'a confirmé l'imposant corpus prophétique trouvé dans les archives royales de Mari⁽²⁾.

Les études ont été dominées par la question de savoir ce qui sous-tendait les prises de position des prophètes et, corrélativement, quelle en était la valeur politique. Les prophètes agissaient-ils au nom de leur clairvoyance, d'axiomes religieux, des intérêts d'un groupe? Leurs choix politiques étaient-ils réalistes ou, au contraire, utopiques? Étaient-ils des patriotes ou, au contraire, une cinquième colonne? Par ailleurs, cherchant une sorte de dénominateur commun des prises de position des différents prophètes, on a eu tendance à les niveler, laissant dans l'ombre ce que chacun d'eux a de spécifique.

Pour la tradition biblique, Isaïe et Jérémie sont, parmi les prophètes dits classiques, ceux qui ont exercé l'activité politique la plus grande. D'après Is 1-39 et 2 R 18,17-20,19, Isaïe a été l'un des principaux acteurs sur la scène politique de Juda dans la seconde moitié du VIII^e s. av. J.-C. D'après le livre de Jérémie, ce prophète a joué un rôle semblable à la fin du VII^e et au début du VI^e s. av. J.-C.⁽³⁾. Aussi, ces

* Cet article reprend le texte d'une conférence donnée à l'institut biblique pontifical de Rome le 10 mars 1995 en tant que titulaire de la «Joseph Gregory McCarthy Professorship».

⁽¹⁾ Voir les histoires de la recherche de L. RAMLOT, «Le prophétisme», *DBS* VIII, 1050-1099 et de B. ALBREKTSON, «Prophecy and Politics in the Old Testament», *The Myth of the State* (ed. H. BIEZAIS) (Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis VI; Stockholm 1972) 45-56.

⁽²⁾ D. CHARPIN - F. JOANNES - S. LACKENBACHER - B. LAFONT, *Archives épistolaires de Mari* I/2 (ARM XXVI; Paris 1988) 294-295; J.M. DURAND, *Archives épistolaires de Mari* I/1 (ARM XXVI; Paris 1988) 377-482; id., «Le mythologème du combat entre le Dieu de l'orage et la Mer en Mésopotamie», *MARI* 7 (1993) 41-61, ici 43-46.

⁽³⁾ Alors que Jr 37-44 attribue un rôle important à Jérémie lors des événements relatifs à la fin du royaume de Juda, 2 R 24,18-25,30 et Jr 52 rapportent les mêmes événements sans une seule mention de Jérémie, P.R. ACKROYD, «Historians and Prophets», *SvEx* 33 (1968) 18-54, ici 37-54 (= *Studies in the Religious Tradition of the Old Testament* [London 1987] 121-151, ici 138-151).

deux prophètes⁽⁴⁾, surtout Isaïe⁽⁵⁾, sont-ils les plus étudiés de ce point de vue. En lisant ces études, on a parfois l'impression qu'elles interprètent, de façon plus ou moins implicite, ces deux livres à la lumière l'un de l'autre. Légitime dans une lecture synchronique du corpus prophétique biblique, cela est inacceptable dès lors qu'il s'agit d'une lecture qui se veut diachronique. On émousserait la pointe du message de chacun des prophètes et on obscurcirait ce qu'il a de spécifique. Voilà ce qui justifie, à mon sens, mon propos de reprendre la question. Mon but est cependant très limité, à savoir de répondre aux questions suivantes: qu'est-ce que, d'après Isaïe et Jérémie, Juda devait faire ou ne pas faire en matière de politique étrangère, et pourquoi? J'essayerai d'abord de dégager, autant que possible, les positions de chacun de ces prophètes, pour ensuite les comparer⁽⁶⁾.

I. Isaïe

D'après le livre qui porte son nom, Isaïe ben Amos a exercé son activité à Jérusalem entre environ 740-700 av.J.-C. Ce fut un temps de grands changements au Proche-Orient, dont l'Assyrie fut le moteur. La tendance à l'expansionnisme, notamment vers l'Ouest et le Sud-Ouest, de tout temps l'une des caractéristiques de la politique assyrienne, s'est traduite avec Tiglath-phalazar III (745-727 av.J.-C.) et ses successeurs par un projet, dont le but était à la limite la domination universelle. L'Assyrie et l'Égypte se disputèrent l'hégémonie en Palestine et en Phénicie. Juda a été pris dans le tourbillon assyrien lors de ce que l'on appelle la guerre syro-éphraïmite (2 R 15,37; 16,5-9; Is 7,1-9), entre 735/4 et 732.

Selon l'hypothèse courante⁽⁷⁾, la guerre syro-éphraïmite était un épisode de l'organisation de la résistance à la poussée assyrienne. Voulant éviter l'existence d'un État neutre sinon pro-assyrien sur leurs arrières, Damas et Israël, qui étaient déjà sous domination assyrienne, essaient d'entraîner Juda dans leur camp. Devant le refus judéen, ils interviennent militairement en vue d'installer sur le trône de Jérusalem un partisan de la lutte contre l'Assyrie. Bien qu'elle se heurte à des difficultés⁽⁸⁾, cette

⁽⁴⁾ R. MARTIN-ACHARD, «Ésaïe et Jérémie aux prises avec les problèmes politiques. Contribution à l'étude du thème: Prophétie et politique», *RHPR* 47 (1967) 208-224.

⁽⁵⁾ F. WILKE, *Jesaja und Assur* (Leipzig 1905); J. KUECHLER, *Die Stellung des Propheten Jesaja zur Politik seiner Zeit* (Tübingen 1906); W. DIETRICH, *Jesaja und die Politik* (BEvT 74; München 1976); F. HUBER, *Jahwe, Juda und die anderen Völker beim Propheten Jesaja* (BZAW 137; Berlin-New York 1976); J. HØGENHAVEN, «Prophecy and Propaganda. Aspects of Political and Religious Reasoning in Israel and the Ancient Near East», *ScandJOT* 1 (1989) 125-141; id., «The Prophet Isaiah and Judaeon Foreign Policy under Ahaz and Hezekiah», *JNES* 49 (1990) 351-354.

⁽⁶⁾ Je laisserai de côté les menaces à l'égard des peuples étrangers, et ne tiendrai compte des textes qui menacent Juda de l'invasion d'un peuple étranger que s'ils expriment aussi l'attitude que Juda doit prendre à l'égard d'un ou de plusieurs peuples étrangers.

⁽⁷⁾ Nombre d'histoires d'Israël et de commentaires des livres des Rois, d'Osée et d'Isaïe la présentent comme si c'était un fait incontestable.

⁽⁸⁾ R. TOMES, «The Reason for the Syro-Ephraïmite War», *JSOT* 59 (1993) 55-71, retrace l'histoire de cette hypothèse et en fait une critique.

interprétation de la guerre syro-éphraïmite reste peut-être préférable à d'autres qui ont été proposées; elle a l'avantage de situer ce conflit local par rapport aux enjeux internationaux.

D'après 2 R 16,5-9, Juda est devenu vassal de l'Assyrie à l'occasion de la guerre syro-éphraïmite. Achaz apparaît sur une liste de rois dont Tiglath-phalazar III a reçu le tribut⁽⁹⁾. Cette liste confirme que Juda était vassal de l'Assyrie du temps de Tiglath-phalazar III, mais elle ne précise pas depuis quand ni dans quelles circonstances il l'est devenu. On ne voit cependant pas à quel moment cela aurait pu arriver après 732⁽¹⁰⁾. Conformément au droit international de l'époque, concrètement à la pratique assyrienne, la soumission a dû être ratifiée par un traité qui définira le statut de Juda à l'intérieur de l'empire assyrien. Juda garde intactes ses institutions nationales et aura droit à la protection assyrienne en cas de menace d'un autre pays, mais il ne jouit plus d'aucune liberté politique. Étroitement surveillé, peut-être par un fonctionnaire assyrien (*qēpu*), il est tenu de s'aligner sur les objectifs de la politique assyrienne. Son armée est à la disposition du roi d'Assyrie, qui peut la mobiliser à son gré. Juda est tenu d'envoyer annuellement à la cour assyrienne le tribut stipulé (*madattu*), et par la même occasion de renouveler l'acte d'allégeance. Le moindre écart sur l'un ou l'autre de ces points était sévèrement puni: destitution ou exécution des responsables, lourdes pénalisations pécuniaires, déportation d'une partie de la population, amoindrissement du territoire ou son annexion, selon les cas⁽¹¹⁾.

Du temps d'Isaïe la politique internationale de Juda était donc dominée par la question des relations avec l'Assyrie. Aussi, toutes les prises de position connues du prophète en la matière sont-elles d'une façon ou d'une autre en rapport avec l'Assyrie. Autant qu'on puisse en juger, la plupart de ces interventions se situent, d'abord, lors des événements qui ont débouché sur la soumission de Juda à l'Assyrie et, ensuite, à l'occasion des révoltes de 713-711 et de 705-701.

Le livre d'Isaïe garde le souvenir de plusieurs interventions du prophète lors de la crise syro-éphraïmite. Isaïe souligne la faiblesse des coalisés et garantit qu'ils ne réussiront pas dans leur projet de s'emparer de Jérusalem et de remplacer son roi. Juda n'a donc rien à craindre (Is 7,1-9). Au moyen du nom symbolique Maher Shalal Hash Baz (« Prompt-butin-proche-pillage »)⁽¹²⁾ qu'il donne à l'un de ses fils, Isaïe annonce la défaite imminente des coalisés par l'Assyrie (Is 8,1-4)⁽¹³⁾. Cette annonce n'a pas tardé à s'accom-

⁽⁹⁾ J. BRIEND – M.-J. SEUX, *Textes du Proche-Orient ancien et histoire d'Israël* (Paris 1977) 104-105.

⁽¹⁰⁾ On a voulu faire remonter la vassalité de Juda à l'égard de l'Assyrie à 738, mais cette hypothèse a de moins en moins de partisans; voir F. J. GONÇALVES, *L'expédition de Sennachérib en Palestine dans la littérature hébraïque ancienne* (ÉtBN 7; Paris 1986 = Publications de l'Institut Orientaliste de Louvain 34; Louvain-la-Neuve 1986) 12-15.

⁽¹¹⁾ Pour ce qui concerne la période d'Isaïe, GONÇALVES, *L'expédition de Sennachérib en Palestine*, 3-134.

⁽¹²⁾ Traduction de *La Bible de Jérusalem* (Paris 1973; réimp. 1988) 1101, note a, et de *La Bible. Traduction Œcuménique* (Paris 1989) 781.

⁽¹³⁾ Il est possible qu'il en soit de même de *šr yšwb*, le nom d'un autre fils

plir: le royaume de Damas a été détruit en 732; Israël a été alors très affaibli, et disparaîtra dix ans plus tard, en 722. La ruine de Damas et d'Israël n'impliquait pas nécessairement pour autant la paix et le bien-être de Juda. Ceux-ci ne dépendent en aucune façon du sort des ennemis de Juda, mais uniquement de son comportement. C'est ce que dit le fameux jeu de mots de Is 7,9b: *ʾm P t'mynu ky P t'mnw* («Si vous ne croyez pas, vous ne tiendrez pas»).

Certes, les chap. 7-8 du livre d'Isaïe ne mentionnent pas l'alliance avec l'Assyrie⁽¹⁴⁾. Cela dit, à la lumière des raisons de son opposition, plus tard, à l'alliance avec l'Égypte, il paraît légitime de conclure qu'Isaïe était aussi contre l'alliance avec l'Assyrie, au nom de la foi qu'il réclamait de Juda. En 8,5-8a, Isaïe accuse Juda d'avoir méprisé «les eaux de Siloé qui coulent doucement» (v. 6) et, en conséquence, le menace de l'invasion assyrienne sous l'image d'un débordement de l'Euphrate. Quoi qu'il en soit de la réalité qu'elles désignent, ainsi que de leurs connotations, «les eaux de Siloé qui coulent doucement» évoquent une attitude de calme⁽¹⁵⁾, qui a sa source en Yahvé. En quoi Juda a-t-il méprisé ce calme? En cédant à la panique devant les coalisés syro-éphraïmites (7,2)? La correspondance normale entre faute et châtement supposerait un rapport entre le mépris du calme et l'Assyrie. Ce mépris du calme ne serait-il pas l'alliance avec l'Assyrie, comme on l'a souvent proposé?⁽¹⁶⁾. La menace de Is 8,5-8a prendrait alors tout son sens. Avec un renversement de rôles, Isaïe annonce à Juda que, au lieu de la paix et du bien-être escomptés, de l'Assyrie ne lui viendra que le malheur.

En 713 ou 712, Yamani, roi d'Ashdod, promeut une coalition anti-assyrienne. Il cherche l'adhésion des autres États philistins, de Juda, Édom et Moab, ainsi que l'appui égyptien⁽¹⁷⁾. L'Assyrie intervient en 711. Yamani se réfugie en Égypte, peut-être en Nubie. Au lieu d'intervenir en sa faveur, on l'extrade à Ninive. L'armée de Sargon II prend Ashdod, Ashdod Maritime et Gat. Ni les documents assyriens ni les textes bibliques ne disent quelle fut la position de Juda, dont le roi était alors Ézéchiass. En revanche, on connaît le jugement qu'Isaïe a porté sur ces événements. D'après Is 20, il l'a exprimé d'une façon qui ne devait pas passer inaperçue. Nu et déchaussé pendant trois ans, il mime d'avance le sort des prisonniers égyptiens et

d'Isaïe (Is 7,3); R. E. CLEMENTS, *Isaiah 1-39* (NCent; London 1980) 83; J. DAY, «Shear-jashub (Isaiah vii 3) and 'the remnant of wrath' (Psalm lxxvi 11)», *VT* 31 (1981) 76-78; J. HØGENHAVEN, «The Prophet Isaiah and Judaeon Foreign Policy under Ahaz and Hezekiah», *JNES* 49 (1990) 352-353.

⁽¹⁴⁾ ACKROYD, «Historians and Prophets», 22-37 (= *Studies*, 125-137); J. L. SICRE, *Los dioses olvidados. Poder y riqueza en los profetas preexilicos* (Institución San Jerónimo para la Investigación Bíblica. Estudios y Monografías 3 - Estudios de Antiguo Testamento 1; Valencia-Madrid 1979) 51-52.

⁽¹⁵⁾ En dépit des obscurités du texte, il est certain que le v. 6 souligne le calme du cours des «eaux de Siloé» et lui oppose l'impétuosité des eaux de l'Euphrate en crue.

⁽¹⁶⁾ MARTIN-ACHARD, «Ésaïe et Jérémie», 212; H. WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*. 1. Teilband Jesaja 1-12 (BKAT X/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1972) 322-328; HUBER, *Jahwe, Juda und die anderen Völker*, 86-87; CLEMENTS, *Isaiah 1-39*, 96.

⁽¹⁷⁾ BRIEND - SEUX, *Textes*, 113-116.

nubiens que l'Assyrie emmènera. Bien qu'il annonce le malheur de l'Égypte et de la Nubie, Isaïe s'adresse à Juda; il l'avertit que ni lui ni les autres États palestiniens ne peuvent compter sur les pays du Nil pour secouer le joug assyrien.

Comme c'était souvent le cas, le changement de règne en Assyrie, à la mort de Sargon II en 705, a été l'occasion de révoltes dans l'empire. Croyant le moment venu de se libérer de la domination assyrienne, Ézéchias se révolte, et prend une part très active dans l'organisation d'une coalition anti-assyrienne parmi les États de Palestine et de Phénicie, appuyée par l'Égypte. Y ont adhéré Ascalon, Ékron, Tyr et Sidon. Il y eut un va-et-vient d'ambassades entre Juda et l'Égypte (Is 18,1-2.4; 30,1-5.6-8; 31,1.3), ainsi que des négociations entre Ézéchias et le Chaldéen Marduk-apal-iddina (Merodak-Baladan) (2 R 20,12-19; 39,1-8), roi de Babylone et chef du front sud de la révolte. Juda a dû intervenir aussi en Philistie. En effet, c'est à Jérusalem que Padi, le roi d'Ékron, renversé par le parti anti-assyrien local, a été exilé et emprisonné. Après avoir maté les révoltes dans le Sud et dans l'Est, en 703 et 702, Sennachérib consacre sa troisième expédition militaire, en 701, à soumettre la Phénicie et la Palestine. Les documents assyriens et les textes bibliques les plus anciens, dont certains peuvent être contemporains, sont unanimes. La campagne a été désastreuse pour Juda. L'armée assyrienne s'est emparée de tout son territoire et a assiégé Jérusalem. Ézéchias s'est rendu, et a dû payer des indemnités de guerre très élevées. En plus, le roi d'Assyrie a pris un énorme butin et a distribué une bonne partie du territoire de Juda entre les rois philistins qui lui étaient restés fidèles⁽¹⁸⁾.

La plupart des oracles d'Isaïe relatifs à la politique internationale conservés par la tradition semblent dater de 705-701. Si la tradition reflète la réalité historique, les prises de position d'Isaïe furent alors plus nombreuses qu'à aucun autre moment de sa longue carrière.

Comme il l'avait déjà fait entre 713-711, Isaïe dénonce l'alliance avec l'Égypte (Is 18,1-2.4; 30,1-5.6-8; 31,1.3). L'alliance avec l'Égypte étant sans nul doute tournée contre l'Assyrie, la critique conclut qu'Isaïe condamnait la révolte anti-assyrienne⁽¹⁹⁾. D'aucuns estiment qu'il prônait la neutralité⁽²⁰⁾. C'est oublier que, au plus tard, dès 732, Juda était lié à l'Assyrie, et

⁽¹⁸⁾ Au sujet des traditions bibliques relatives aux événements de 701, ainsi que de leur développement, on peut voir, parmi les nombreuses études récentes: GONÇALVES, *L'expédition de Sennachérib en Palestine*, 135-544; E. VOGT, *Der Aufstand Hiskias und die Belagerung Jerusalems 701 v. Chr.* (AnBib 106; Rome 1986); G.W. VERA CHAMAZA, *Hizkijahu rey de Judá. Interpretación y reconstrucción de las narraciones de Ezequías* (Institución San Jerónimo 20; Valencia 1988); L. CAMP, *Hiskija und Hiskijabild. Analyse und Interpretation von 2 Kön 18-20* (MThA 9; Altenberge 1990); Chr. HARDMEIER, *Prophetie im Streit vor dem Untergang Judas. Erzählkommunikative Studien zur Entstehungssituation der Jesaja- und Jeremiaerzählungen in II Reg 18-20 und Jer 37-40* (BZAW 187; Berlin-New York 1990); Chr. R. SEITZ, *Zion's Final Destiny. The Development of the Book of Isaiah. A Reassessment of Isaiah 36-39* (Minneapolis 1991).

⁽¹⁹⁾ R.E. CLEMENTS, «Isaiah 14,22-27. A Central Passage Reconsidered», *The Book of Isaiah. Le livre d'Isaïe. Les oracles et leurs relectures. Unité et complexité de l'ouvrage* (éd. J. VERMEYLEN) (BETL 81; Leuven 1989) 253-262, ici 259.

⁽²⁰⁾ K. ELLIGER, «Prophet und Politik», *ZAW* 53 (1935) 3-22, ici 17 (= *Kleine Schriften zum Alten Testament* [TBü 32; München 1966] 119-140); MARTIN-ACHARD,

ne pouvait plus rester neutre. Il n'avait que le choix entre la fidélité au serment prêté par son roi, c'est-à-dire la soumission à l'Assyrie, et l'infidélité, c'est-à-dire la révolte. La moindre velléité de neutralité de la part de Juda était déjà une révolte. De nombreux critiques estiment qu'Isaïe était partisan de la soumission à l'Assyrie⁽²¹⁾. On en a suggéré plusieurs raisons: des considérations de *Realpolitik*, à savoir la trop grande puissance de l'Assyrie qui aurait raison de tout essai de se soustraire à sa domination⁽²²⁾; la conception isaïenne d'Assur comme l'instrument de Yahvé pour punir Juda⁽²³⁾; le fait que Juda était lié à Assur par un serment prêté au nom de Yahvé⁽²⁴⁾; la certitude que Juda était condamné et aurait le même sort qu'Israël⁽²⁵⁾.

Rien dans les oracles d'Isaïe ne suggère qu'il prônait la soumission à l'Assyrie et qu'il s'opposait à la révolte. À la lecture de bon nombre des études sur cette question, par exemple celles toutes récentes de J. Høgenhaven⁽²⁶⁾, on a l'impression que cette interprétation du message politique d'Isaïe est le fruit de son assimilation à celui de Jérémie. J'estime, au contraire, que Is 30,15-17 suppose l'appui d'Isaïe à la révolte:

15. Car ainsi parle le Seigneur Yahvé, le Saint d'Israël:
«Par l'inactivité et le repos vous serez victorieux,
dans la tranquillité et l'assurance sera votre vaillance»,
mais vous n'en voulez pas.

«Ésaïe et Jérémie», 208-218; DIETRICH, *Jesaja und die Politik*, 133, 222, 266; J. VERMEYLEN, *Du prophète Isaïe à l'apocalyptique*. Isaïe I-XXXV, miroir d'un demi-millénaire d'expérience religieuse en Israël (Paris 1977) I, 318; H. WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*. 3. Teilband *Jesaja 28-39. Das Buch, der Prophet und seine Botschaft* (BKAT; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1982) 1185. H. DONNER, *Israel unter den Völkern*. Die Stellung der klassischen Propheten des 8. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. zur Aussenpolitik der Könige von Israel und Juda (SVT 11; Leiden 1964) 169-172, emploie le terme «Neutralität», mais en réalité il parle de soumission à l'Assyrie pour éviter le pire, c'est-à-dire l'extinction du royaume de Juda et l'annexion de son territoire par l'Assyrie.

⁽²¹⁾ R. KITTEL, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel* (1917) II, 558; O. EISSFELDT, «Nûah, "sich vertragen"», *Schweizerische Theologische Umschau* 20 (1950) 71-74 (= *Kleine Schriften* [Tübingen 1966] III, 124-128); N. K. GOTTWALD, *All the Kingdoms of the Earth*. Israelite Prophecy and International Relations in the Ancient Near East (New York 1964) 147-208; G. FOHRER, *Das Buch Jesaja* (Zürcher Bibelkommentare; Zürich-Stuttgart 1967) II, 101-102; J. D. W. WATTS, *Isaiah 1-33* (Word Biblical Commentary 24; Waco, Texas 1985) xxvii, 78, 93, 117-118, 286, 397; id., *Isaiah 34-66* (Word Biblical Commentary 25; Waco, Texas 1987) 30; HØGENHAVEN, «Prophecy and Propaganda», 125-141; id., «The Prophet Isaiah», 351-354.

⁽²²⁾ DONNER, *Israel unter den Völkern*, 169-172.

⁽²³⁾ DONNER, *Israel unter den Völkern*, 169-172.

⁽²⁴⁾ H. H. ROWLEY, «Hezekiah's Reform and Rebellion», *BJRL* 44 (1962) 395-431, ici 422-423 (= *Men of God*. Studies in Old Testament History and Prophecy [London 1963] 98-132).

⁽²⁵⁾ M. GRANT, *The History of Ancient Israel* (New York 1984) 150.

⁽²⁶⁾ HØGENHAVEN, «Prophecy and Propaganda», 125-141; id., «The Prophet Isaiah», 351-354.

16. Vous dites: « Non! Nous prendrons la course à cheval ».
 Eh bien, vous prendrez la fuite.
 Et (encore): « Nous monterons des coursiers rapides ».
 Eh bien, rapides seront vos poursuivants ⁽²⁷⁾.

On traduit habituellement le verbe *twš^cwn* par « vous serez sauvés ». Ce sens du verbe est cependant trop général dans le contexte, qui demande plutôt le sens de « vous serez victorieux » ou « vous aurez la victoire ». La racine *yš^c* a souvent le sens de « être victorieux » et « donner la victoire », aux formes verbales (nif. ⁽²⁸⁾ et hif. ⁽²⁹⁾), et de « victoire », aux formes nominales (*yš^c* ⁽³⁰⁾, *yšw^ch* ⁽³¹⁾ et *tšw^ch* ⁽³²⁾). En Is 30,15, au nif. *twš^cwn* correspond, dans l'autre proposition de la citation de Yahvé, l'expression *thyh gbwr^{tkm}*, « sera votre vaillance/bravoure ». Or, le terme *gbwr^h* a une connotation militaire. En plus, les deux versets suivants ne parlent que de réalités militaires: chevaux, coursiers rapides pour l'attaque, poursuite d'une armée en débandade, signal du rassemblement des guerriers. En bref, Is 30,15 promet la victoire à Juda par « l'inactivité et le repos, par la tranquillité et l'assurance ». À ces moyens proposés par Yahvé, au v. 16, les Judéens opposent leur propre stratégie, axée sur la rapidité de leur cavalerie, à laquelle le prophète oppose, finalement, la déroute.

Isaïe pose-t-il, d'une façon générale, les conditions à toute victoire de Juda sur n'importe quel ennemi? Il paraît plus probable qu'il se réfère à la victoire sur un ennemi concret, dans des circonstances particulières. Quel ennemi et quelles circonstances? Dans le contexte du livre d'Isaïe, et du temps de ce prophète, les ennemis de Juda connus furent les syro-éphraïmites et l'Assyrie. Rien ne suggère les syro-éphraïmites. Les oracles qui les concernent annoncent leur défaite par les Assyriens, et ne parlent d'une quelconque victoire de Juda. Reste l'Assyrie. La place de Is 30,15-17 dans le livre conseille de voir en elle l'ennemi que l'on espère vaincre, et de situer l'oracle lors de la révolte de 705-701. En effet, 30,15-17 se trouve au milieu d'une série d'oracles de 705-701 qui dénoncent l'alliance avec l'Égypte, laquelle était tournée contre l'Assyrie. De par le thème de la cavalerie, Is 30,15-17 est très proche de Is 31,1.3.

Yahvé lui-même veut la victoire dont Is 30,15 pose les conditions. Si l'ennemi de Juda est l'Assyrie, cela suppose que Yahvé veut la victoire sur cette puissance. Or, la victoire contre l'Assyrie présuppose la révolte, et il est difficilement concevable qu'Isaïe ne s'en rende pas compte. On doit donc conclure que, loin de s'y opposer, et encore moins de prôner la soumission

⁽²⁷⁾ On trouvera une étude détaillée de Is 30,15-17 en GONÇALVES, *L'expédition de Sennachérib en Palestine*, 166-178.

⁽²⁸⁾ Dt 33,29; Za 9,9; Ps 33,16.

⁽²⁹⁾ Dt 20,4; Jg 7,2.7; 1 S 14,6.23.39; 17,47; 2 S 8,6.14; 1 Ch 9,14; 18,6.13; Ps 20,7; 44,4.7.8.

⁽³⁰⁾ Ps 20,7.

⁽³¹⁾ Ex 14,13; 15,2; 1 S 14,45; Is 12,2; Ha 3,8; Ps 18,51 = 2 S 22,51; Ps 20,6; 21,2.6; 44,5; 118,14.15.21; 2 Ch 20,17.

⁽³²⁾ Jg 15,18; 1 S 11,13; 19,5; 2 S 19,3; 23,10.12; 2 R 5,1; 13,17; Ps 33,17; 144,10; Pr 21,31; 1 Ch 11,14.

de Juda à l'Assyrie, Isaïe cautionnait la révolte⁽³³⁾. Certes, aux yeux d'Isaïe, l'expédition de Sennachérib en 701 s'est soldée par un énorme désastre, dont Juda porte l'entière responsabilité (Is 1,4-8 et 22,1-14)⁽³⁴⁾. Pourtant, rien dans ces textes ne suggère que le prophète ait reproché aux Judéens la cause de l'invasion, c'est-à-dire la révolte⁽³⁵⁾. Ce qu'il leur reproche, c'est d'avoir «abandonné Yahvé, méprisé le Saint d'Israël» (Is 1,4), ou plus précisément, de s'être alors tournés vers le système défensif de Jérusalem au lieu de se tourner vers Yahvé (Is 22,8b-11). Cela suppose que, selon Isaïe, l'invasion aurait eu une issue tout autre, si Juda s'en était alors entièrement remis à Yahvé; elle se serait soldée par la victoire de Juda⁽³⁶⁾.

Pourquoi alors Isaïe était-il contre l'alliance avec l'Égypte? Rien dans ses oracles ne suggère des raisons politiques⁽³⁷⁾ ou militaires. En effet, Isaïe reconnaît que l'Égypte a de nombreux chars et des cavaliers très puissants (Is 31,1), mais il déclare que Yahvé lui-même fera périr ensemble l'Égypte et Juda (Is 31,1.3). Il dénomme l'Égypte Rahab, le terrible monstre du Chaos, mais il précise que c'est un Rahab que Yahvé a réduit à l'inactivité (Is 30,6-8). L'alliance avec l'Égypte est donc inutile (Is 20,1-6; 30,1-5.6-8) non pas que l'Égypte soit dépourvue d'une bonne armée, mais parce que Yahvé lui-même la neutralise ou la détruit. L'alliance avec l'Égypte n'est pas seulement inutile; elle ne peut que mener au désastre, parce qu'elle est un péché (*lm'n spwt hf't 'l-hf't*, «en sorte d'accumuler péché sur péché»; 30,1). Is 30,1-5 et 31,1.3 disent de façon particulièrement claire et incisive en quoi consiste ce péché. Je citerai ce dernier passage:

⁽³³⁾ W. ZIMMERLI, «Jesaja und Hiskia», *Wort und Geschichte. Festschrift für Karl Elliger* (AOAT 18; Kevelaer-Neukirchen-Vluyn 1973) 109-208 (= *Studien zur alttestamentlichen Theologie und Prophetie. Gesammelte Aufsätze* [TBü 51; München 1974] II, 88-103), fut, à ma connaissance, le seul à suggérer qu'Isaïe a été un partisan de la révolte anti-assyrienne, sinon l'un de ses pères spirituels. Cet exégète s'appuie sur des considérations différentes des miennes. En effet, il part du fait que le plan de Yahvé prévoyait la destruction de l'Assyrie au pays de Juda (Is 14,24-27). Pour rendre possible l'exécution de ce plan, il fallait attirer l'Assyrie en Juda, ce que la révolte ne manquerait pas de faire.

⁽³⁴⁾ Voir l'étude de ces textes en GONÇALVES, *L'expédition de Sennachérib en Palestine*, 178-187 et 235-255, et aussi J. A. EMERTON, «The Historical Background of Isaiah 1:4-9», *Eretz Israel* 24 (1993) 34*-40*, pour ce qui est de Is 1,4-8.

⁽³⁵⁾ Rien ne conseille d'identifier la «rébellion» (*twšypw srh*) dont Isaïe accuse les Judéens, en 1,5, avec la révolte anti-assyrienne; contre, par exemple, J. BRIGHT, *A History of Israel* (Philadelphia 1981) 293 et W. T. CLAASSEN, «Linguistic Arguments and the Dating of Isaiah 1:4-9», *JNWS* 3 (1974) 1-18, ici 10-11 et 16. En effet, la révolte politique d'un vassal contre son suzerain s'exprime non pas au moyen de la racine *swr* (*srh*), mais au moyen de la racine *mrd* (Gn 4,14; 2 R 18,7.20; 24,1.20; Is 36,5; Jr 52,3; Ez 17,15; 2 Ch 13,6; 36,13; Ne 6,6). Dans le prolongement de Is 1,4 (*'zbw 't yhw n'sw 't-qdwš ysr'l*, «ils ont abandonné Yahvé, méprisé le Saint d'Israël»), la rébellion dans laquelle les Judéens persistent, d'après le v. 5, est, comme en Is 30,1, l'apostasie à l'égard de Yahvé lui-même.

⁽³⁶⁾ En Is 14,25a, Yahvé déclare sous serment: «Je briserai Assur dans mon pays, je le piétinerai sur mes montagnes». L'origine isaïenne de ce texte est cependant contestée; CLEMENTS, «Isaiah 14,22-27», 253-262.

⁽³⁷⁾ L'opinion de G. BRUNET, *Essai sur l'Isaïe de l'histoire*. Étude de quelques textes notamment Isa. VII, VIII & XXII (Paris 1975), selon laquelle Isaïe s'opposait aux alliances au nom d'un nationalisme et d'un isolationnisme chauvins n'a pas d'appui dans les textes.

1. Malheur! ceux qui descendent en Égypte pour de l'aide.
Ils s'appuient sur les chevaux,
se confient dans les chars parce qu'ils sont nombreux,
et dans les cavaliers parce qu'ils sont très puissants,
mais ils ne portent pas leurs regards sur le Saint d'Israël,
et ne recherchent pas Yahvé.
3. Mais, l'Égypte est humaine, et non pas divine,
ses chevaux sont chair, et non pas esprit.
Yahvé étendra sa main;
trébuchera celui qui aide et tombera celui qui est aidé,
et tous ensemble périront.

Cet oracle est entièrement construit sur l'opposition entre, d'une part, l'Égypte et sa cavalerie et, de l'autre, Yahvé, le Saint d'Israël. Son sens est limpide: chercher l'alliance avec l'Égypte, c'est opter pour l'Égypte contre Yahvé, pour l'homme contre Dieu, pour la chair contre l'esprit.

La structure et le message de 30,1-5 sont identiques à ceux de 31,1.3⁽³⁸⁾. Isaïe y évoque la confiance que Juda mettait en l'Égypte au moyen des images de refuge: *l'wz bm'wz pr'h wlhswt bšl mšrym*, «pour se réfugier dans le refuge du Pharaon, et s'abriter à l'ombre de l'Égypte». Ce vocabulaire et ces images évoquent régulièrement dans les Psaumes et autres textes apparentés la protection que l'orant cherche ou trouve en Yahvé/Dieu ou dans une réalité en rapport étroit avec Yahvé/Dieu. Is 30,1-5 et 28,15.17, un passage qui est à tous égards très proche de Is 30,1-5, sont parmi les rares textes où ces images de refuge se réfèrent, à l'affirmative, à une réalité qui n'est pas Yahvé/Dieu ou en rapport immédiat avec Yahvé/Dieu. Isaïe exprime ainsi son jugement théologique sur l'alliance de Juda avec l'Égypte. Dire que Juda cherche son refuge et son abri en Égypte équivaut à dire qu'il lui attribue un rôle que seul Yahvé/Dieu peut jouer. En faisant alliance avec l'Égypte, Juda met ce pays et sa puissance militaire à la place de Yahvé. L'idée d'idolâtrie est renforcée encore par les termes dont le prophète se sert, aux vv.3 et 5, pour évoquer l'échec de l'alliance, à savoir *bšt*, *klmh*, *hrph*, *P hw'yl* («honte», «confusion», «opprobre», «inutilité»). En effet, ces termes évoquent régulièrement le sort de ceux qui abandonnent Yahvé pour mettre leur espoir dans d'autres réalités, notamment les dieux païens et les idoles.

Au fond, Isaïe donne une seule raison de son opposition à l'alliance avec l'Égypte, et elle est d'ordre religieux⁽³⁹⁾. Faire alliance avec l'Égypte,

⁽³⁸⁾ La plupart des oracles d'Isaïe ayant trait à l'alliance avec l'Égypte et aux moyens militaires sont construits sur des oppositions (30,6-8), notamment entre ce que Yahvé veut et ce que Juda décide (22,8b-11). À trois reprises cela s'exprime par l'opposition entre une citation de Yahvé et une citation des destinataires de l'oracle (28,7-13.14-18; 30,15-17). Poussée à ses dernières conséquences, en 30,1-5 et 31,1.3, l'opposition est entre Yahvé lui-même et l'Égypte, c'est-à-dire entre Dieu et l'homme.

⁽³⁹⁾ Il est cependant gratuit de supposer qu'Isaïe s'opposait aux alliances avec les peuples au nom de l'alliance avec Yahvé, comme fait, par exemple, MARTIN-ACHARD, «Ésaïe et Jérémie», 212-218 — cette notion étant absente du message d'Isaïe — ou encore par peur des influences religieuses, notamment de la reconnaissance

c'est attendre de l'Égypte la victoire et la paix, des biens que seul Yahvé peut donner à Juda, et donc se choisir l'Égypte pour dieu, à la place de Yahvé⁽⁴⁰⁾. Cet échange de Dieu contre l'homme, voilà le renversement absolu de l'ordre des choses, en d'autres mots, l'orgueil. Or, quand viendra le jour de Yahvé, tout orgueil sera abaissé et Yahvé seul sera exalté (Is 2,12-17)⁽⁴¹⁾. Par la même logique, Isaïe condamne non seulement toute alliance avec les peuples étrangers, y compris la vassalité à l'égard de l'Assyrie, mais aussi le recours aux moyens militaires propres, offensifs (Is 30,15-17) ou défensifs (Is 22,8b-11)⁽⁴²⁾, car ils prendraient eux aussi la place de Yahvé. Pour Isaïe, la confiance en Yahvé, qui ne peut être qu'absolue, exclut toute stratégie militaire. Les deux sont incompatibles.

II. Jérémie

Quoi qu'il en soit des incertitudes au sujet de la chronologie de Jérémie⁽⁴³⁾, il est certain qu'il a vécu et a exercé son activité à la fin du VII^e s. av.J.-C. Ce fut une période particulièrement troublée au Proche-Orient. Assyriens, Babyloniens/Chaldéens, Égyptiens, voire Mèdes, s'y livraient une lutte acharnée pour l'hégémonie⁽⁴⁴⁾. Bien amorcée dès 626 la chute de l'Assyrie fut définitive en 606. Restaient en lice la Babylonie et l'Égypte entre lesquelles le royaume de Juda va être ballotté, et ne tardera pas à sombrer. Je rappelle brièvement les principaux développements historiques qui ont été le cadre, ou l'occasion, de l'activité de Jérémie.

En 609, Juda était du côté babylonien. Son roi, Josias, a été tué cette même année, à Megiddo, alors qu'il s'opposait au Pharaon Nékao II, allié de l'Assyrie contre les Babyloniens et les Mèdes. Le «Peuple du Pays» place sur le trône de Juda Joachaz, l'un des fils de Josias (2 R 23,29-30), mais quelques semaines plus tard, Nékao II le destitue et l'emmène prisonnier en Égypte, où il mourra. Le Pharaon met à la place de Joachaz son frère Élyaqim, qui reçoit le nom de Joiaqim. Juda est ainsi devenu vassal de l'Égypte (2 R 23,31-35). Le rapport des forces ayant changé, à la faveur de la victoire des Babyloniens sur les Égyptiens à Karkémish, l'été

ce des dieux étrangers que l'alliance comportait peut-être; contre, par exemple, BRIGHT, *A History of Israel*, 292-293.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ SICRE, *Los dioses olvidados*, 53-64.

⁽⁴¹⁾ J. BARTON, «Begründungsversuche der prophetischen Unheilsankündigung im Alten Testament», *EvT* 47 (1987) 427-435. C'est également à cause de son orgueil qu'Isaïe condamne l'Assyrie: elle prétend agir d'elle-même alors qu'elle n'est qu'un instrument de Yahvé (Is 10,5-15*).

⁽⁴²⁾ Il a fallu à BRUNET, *Essai sur l'Isaïe de l'histoire*, beaucoup d'ingéniosité pour découvrir en Isaïe le stratège de la «solution du rempart», opposé uniquement à la guerre offensive et à la «défense élastique».

⁽⁴³⁾ H. CAZELLES, «La vie de Jérémie dans son contexte national et international», *Le livre de Jérémie. Le prophète et son milieu. Les oracles et leur transmission* (éd. P.-M. BOGAERT) (BETL 54; Leuven 1981) 21-39.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ A. MALAMAT, «The Twilight in Judah: In the Egyptian-Babylonian Maelstrom», *Congress Volume. Edinburgh 1974* (SVT 28; Leiden 1975) 123-145; id., «The Kingdom of Judah between Egypt and Babylon: A Small State within a Great Power Confrontation», *Text and Context. Old Testament and Semitic Studies for F. C. Fensham* (ed. W. CLAASSEN) (JSOTSS 48; Sheffield 1988) 117-129.

605, Juda a dû accepter la suzeraineté babylonienne (2 R 24,1). Une victoire égyptienne sur les Babyloniens en 601 ayant éveillé en Juda l'espoir de se libérer de la domination babylonienne, Joiaqim refuse le versement du tribut et se tourne vers l'Égypte. En réponse, Nabuchodonosor assiège Jérusalem au début de 597. Le 15/16 mars, Joakîn, qui avait succédé à son père Joiaqim à la fin de 598 (2 R 24,6), se rend. Nabuchodonosor le déporte à Babylone avec une partie de la population de la ville et le remplace par son oncle Mattanya, qui prend le nom de Sédécias (2 R 24,10-17). Celui-ci refuse le tribut en 589 ou 588⁽⁴⁵⁾. À la fin de la même année ou au début de l'année suivante, Nabuchodonosor assiège de nouveau Jérusalem. L'intervention d'une armée égyptienne en Palestine oblige les Babyloniens à lever le siège (Jr 37,5-10); ils le reprendront, et ils s'empareront de la ville l'été 587 ou 586. Sédécias s'enfuit, mais il est capturé et emmené à Babylone, où il mourra (2 R 25,1-21.27-30; Jr 52,3-34). Ce fut la fin du royaume de Juda. À cette occasion eut lieu une nouvelle déportation. Les Babyloniens confient le gouvernement de Juda à Godolias, fils de Ahiqam, qui installe son siège à Miçpa. Godolias fut assassiné par Yishmaël, de sang royal, qui voulait sans doute poursuivre la résistance contre Babylone (2 R 25,22-25; Jr 40,7-41,15). L'un des chefs militaires, Yoḥanan, fils de Qareaḥ, se réfugie en Égypte avec un groupe de Judéens, dont Jérémie et Baruch (2 R 25,26; Jr 41,16-43,7).

Jérémie condamne les alliances avec l'Égypte et l'Assyrie. Cette condamnation n'est cependant pas fréquente dans son livre. Elle ne s'y trouve qu'au chap. 2. Les vv. 36-37 visent l'alliance avec l'Égypte, mais le prophète y rappelle l'échec de l'alliance avec l'Assyrie, à la fois garantie et illustration de l'échec auquel est également vouée l'alliance avec l'Égypte. D'aucuns ont interprété dans le même sens les questions du v. 18:

Et maintenant,
qu'as-tu à aller en Égypte pour boire l'eau du Nil?
et qu'as-tu à aller en Assyrie pour boire l'eau du Fleuve?

Rien ne suggérant une différence de temps entre les deux propositions nominales interrogatives (*mh-lk*), on doit les traduire toutes les deux au présent. La référence à deux alliances⁽⁴⁶⁾ successives, l'une avec l'Assyrie et l'autre avec l'Égypte, paraît donc exclue⁽⁴⁷⁾. Jérémie parle-t-il d'une façon générale du ballottement entre les grandes puissances?⁽⁴⁸⁾ Selon l'opinion

⁽⁴⁵⁾ La chronologie des événements relatifs à la destruction de Jérusalem reste disputée; voir H. CAZELLES, « 587 ou 586? », *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth*. Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman (eds. Carol L. MEYERS-M. O'CONNOR) (ASOR Special Volume Series 1; Winona Lake, IN 1983) 427-435.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Au sujet de l'image ici employée pour évoquer l'alliance, voir S. HERRMANN, *Jeremia* (BKAT XX2; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1990) 132-134.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ C'est avant tout à cause de la difficulté de trouver une conjoncture historique où Juda aurait été en même temps l'allié de l'Égypte et de l'Assyrie que SICRE, *Los dioses olvidados*, 68-71, propose de traduire la première proposition au futur et la seconde au passé, et d'y voir deux alliances séparées dans le temps.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ J. MILGROM, « The Date of Jeremiah, Chapter 2 », *JNES* 14 (1955) 65-69, ici 65; R. ALBERTZ, « Jer 2-6 und die Frühzeitverkündigung Jeremias », *ZAW* 94 (1982) 20-47, ici 38.

la plus répandue, le prophète viserait deux alliances simultanées, et l'oracle daterait d'un moment où l'Assyrie ne s'était pas encore effondrée⁽⁴⁹⁾. Yahvé condamne ces alliances parce qu'elles équivalent à l'abandonner (vv. 17 et 19)⁽⁵⁰⁾.

Les autres prises de position de Jérémie au sujet de la politique étrangère de Juda se résument en un appel à la soumission à l'égard de Babylone. On trouve cet appel en Jr 21,1-10, et surtout dans les récits de type biographique des chap. 27-29 et 37-43. On sait les difficultés auxquelles se heurte l'exégèse de ces récits⁽⁵¹⁾. Cela dit, leur discussion, impossible dans le cadre de cet exposé, ne me paraît pas indispensable pour mon propos.

D'après Jr 27,2-4,11⁽⁵²⁾, accepter l'autorité de Babylone est pour chacune des autres nations la condition pour que Yahvé lui accorde la paix et la prospérité. Jérémie a exprimé cela par une action symbolique. Un joug sur la nuque, il adresse aux rois d'Édom, de Moab, de Ammon, de Tyr et de Sidon le message suivant: «La nation qui met sa nuque sous le joug du roi de Babylone et le sert, je lui accorderai la tranquillité sur sa terre, oracle de Yahvé, elle la cultivera et y habitera» (v. 11). Le v. 3 situe l'épisode au temps de Sédécias⁽⁵³⁾. On le date d'habitude de 594/3. Les ambassadeurs

⁽⁴⁹⁾ R. LIWAK, *Der Prophet und die Geschichte*. Eine literar-historische Untersuchung zum Jeremiabuch (BWANT 121; Stuttgart 1987) 170-174 et 182-183; G. W. AHLSTRÖM, «Prophetical Echoes of Assyrian Growth and Decline», *DUMU-E2-DUB-BA-A*. Studies in Honor of Ake W. Sjöberg (Occasional Publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund 11; Philadelphia 1989) 1-6, ici 3-5; HERRMANN, *Jeremia*, 134-136.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Employée aux vv. 17 et 19, l'expression *'zb 't-yhwh* («abandonner Yahvé») encadre la dénonciation des alliances, au v. 18. D'après le v. 37, l'échec de l'alliance avec l'Égypte est dû au fait que Yahvé rejette l'objet de la confiance de Juda (*ky m's yhw bmb'hyk*).

⁽⁵¹⁾ Isolés par B. Duhm et appelés par S. Mowinckel la source B, les récits de Jr 19-20; 26-45 et 51,59-64 ont fait l'objet d'un grand nombre d'études. Parmi d'autres, B. DUHM, *Das Buch Jeremia* (Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum AT 2; Tübingen 1901) xi-xx; S. MOWINCKEL, *Zur Komposition des Buches Jeremia* (Kristiania 1914); G. WANKE, *Untersuchungen zur sogenannten Baruchsschrift* (BZAW 122; Berlin 1971); N. LOHFINK, «Die Gattung der "Historischen Kurzgeschichte" in den letzten Jahren von Juda und in der Zeit des Babylonischen Exils», *ZAW* 90 (1978) 319-347; K.-F. POHLMANN, *Studien zum Jeremiabuch*. Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der Entstehung des Jeremiabuches (FRLANT 118; Göttingen 1978); H. MIGSCH, *Gottes Wort über das Ende Jerusalems*. Eine literar- stil- und gattungskritische Untersuchung des Berichtes Jeremia 34,1-7; 32,2-5; 37,3-38,28 (Österreichische Biblische Studien 2; Klosterneuburg 1981); Chr. R. SEITZ, *Theology in Conflict*. Reactions to the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah (BZAW 176; Berlin-New York 1989); HARDMEIER, *Prophezie im Streit*; A. GRAUPNER, *Auftrag und Geschick des Propheten Jeremia*. Literarische Eigenart, Herkunft und Intention vordeuteronomistischer Prosa im Jeremiabuch (BTSt 15; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1991); H.-J. STIPP, *Jeremia im Parteienstreit*. Studien zur Textentwicklung von Jer 26,36-43 und 45 als Beitrag zur Geschichte Jeremias, seines Buches und jüdischer Parteien im 6. Jahrhundert (Athenäums Monografien: Theologie; BBB 82; Frankfurt a. M. 1992).

⁽⁵²⁾ On s'accorde pour voir dans ce récit d'action symbolique le noyau le plus ancien du chapitre; W. MCKANE, «Jeremiah 27,5-8, especially "Nebuchadnezzar, my servant"», *Propheten und Prophetenbuch*. Festschrift für Otto Kaiser (BZAW 185; Berlin-New York 1989) 98-110, ici 109; GRAUPNER, *Auftrag und Geschick des Propheten Jeremia*, 62-72.

des pays mentionnés, qui étaient alors à Jérusalem, seraient en train d'organiser le soulèvement contre la Babylonie, et cela à la faveur de troubles survenus dans son armée en 595/4. L'action symbolique de Jérémie serait la réaction du prophète à cette démarche.

Sauf en Jr 27,2-4.11, tous les appels de Jérémie à la soumission à la Babylonie s'adressent à Juda, à son roi ou à une partie du peuple. Le prophète réitère cet appel à chaque nouvelle circonstance. Ainsi, d'après Jr 29,5-7, il écrit aux Hiérosolymitains que Nabuchodonosor avait exilés en 597 pour les exhorter à faire comme s'ils devaient vivre à jamais en Babylonie. La lettre se conclut par l'exhortation suivante⁽⁵⁴⁾: « Recherchez la prospérité (*šlwm*) de la ville⁽⁵⁵⁾ où je vous ai déportés, écrit-il, et priez Yahvé en sa faveur, car par sa prospérité vous aurez la prospérité » (v. 7). On pense, en général, que la lettre est plus ou moins contemporaine de l'action symbolique du chap. 27. Le prophète détromperait ceux des exilés qui voyaient dans les troubles de l'armée babylonienne les signes avant-coureurs d'un retour imminent au pays.

Les autres appels à la soumission ont pour cadre le siège de Jérusalem entre 589/8-587/6 av. J.-C. et les événements qui s'ensuivirent (Jr 37-43). Lors du siège de Jérusalem, ils prennent la forme d'un appel à se rendre. D'après Jr 38,17-18, Jérémie met le roi Sédécias devant le choix suivant: S'il se rend aux officiers du roi de Babylone, il aura la vie sauve, ainsi que sa famille, et Jérusalem ne sera pas incendiée; au contraire, s'il résiste, la ville sera incendiée (cf. aussi le v. 23). En 38,2 et 21,9⁽⁵⁶⁾, c'est tout le peuple qui est mis devant ce même choix: rester dans la ville assiégée et mourir; se rendre aux Chaldéens et avoir la vie sauve.

Les deux récits de la libération de Jérémie (39,11-14⁽⁵⁷⁾ et 40,1-6) s'accordent sur le fait que le prophète est resté auprès de Godolias, le gouverneur nommé par les Babyloniens (39,14 et 40,1-6). D'après 40,4-6, c'est Jérémie lui-même qui en a ainsi décidé. En parfaite cohérence avec ce qu'il avait présenté comme étant la volonté de Yahvé, le prophète cautionne ainsi, de sa présence, le statut politique imposé par Babylone. C'est ce qui ressort encore plus clairement du récit de la fuite en Égypte (41,16-43,7). Jérémie déclare que le départ en Égypte va à l'encontre de la volonté de Yahvé. Celui-ci veut que le peuple reste dans le pays sous l'autorité du roi de Babylone. C'est là que Yahvé a décidé de le faire prospérer (42,7-22).

⁽⁵³⁾ Confirmée par le v. 12 et par 28,1, cette information est en désaccord avec la date donnée par le v. 1 du TM: « Au début du règne de Joiaqim ».

⁽⁵⁴⁾ La critique s'accorde pour voir aux vv. 4-7* le noyau primitif de la lettre; D. L. SMITH, « Jeremiah as Prophet of Nonviolent Resistance », *JSOT* 43 (1989) 95-107, ici 96-97; GRAUPNER, *Auftrag und Geschick des Propheten Jeremia*, 76-82.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ « du pays », d'après le Grec.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ On tient généralement Jr 21,1-10 pour secondaire; W. MCKANE, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah. I. Introduction and Commentary on Jeremiah I-XXV* (ICC; Edinburgh 1986) 491-506. W. THIEL, *Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1-25* (WM 41; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1973) 236, reconnaît un noyau jérémién au v. 9.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Absents du Grec, les vv. 11-13 sont sans doute tardifs.

Les récits de Jr 27–29 et 37–43, tout au moins sous leur forme actuelle, reflètent les luttes pour la suprématie entre les différentes communautés juives qui se sont constituées après la disparition du royaume de Juda. Ainsi, Jr 41,16–43,7 discrédite la communauté juive d'Égypte, en la présentant comme étant née d'une désobéissance à Yahvé, et donc entachée d'un péché originel. D'après ce récit, Yoḥanan, a entraîné en Égypte tous les Judéens que les Babyloniens avaient laissés⁽⁵⁸⁾. Le pays de Juda étant vide et la communauté d'Égypte illégitime, il ne reste que la communauté de Babylone; c'est elle la porteuse de la légitimité judéenne. Les récits de Jr 37–43 sont un document de propagande de la communauté juive de Babylone. En a-t-il été toujours ainsi? Oui, répond N. Lohfink, qui tient ces récits pour une unité foncière⁽⁵⁹⁾. En revanche, H.-J. Stipp y distingue trois récits, et estime qu'un seul, qu'il appelle «Chute du Judaïsme palestinien», est d'origine babylonienne. Son but serait de montrer que la communauté de Babylone a eu la suprématie, malgré elle⁽⁶⁰⁾. Pour K.-F. Pohlmann, la «propagande» pro-Diaspora babylonienne est entièrement le fruit d'une rédaction du IV^e s. av. J.-C.⁽⁶¹⁾.

À ma connaissance, R. P. Carroll est l'un des rares à tenir Jr 37–43 pour un simple produit du conflit entre les communautés juives à partir du VI^e s. av. J.-C.⁽⁶²⁾. Pour cet exégète, Jérémie est avant tout le personnage du livre qui porte ce nom. Il se peut que ce personnage corresponde à une personne historique, mais le livre ne nous y donne pas accès. Cela dit, d'une façon générale, les critiques accordent une grande valeur — d'aucuns très grande — à ces récits.

Il n'y a pas de raisons sérieuses de douter que Jérémie a prôné, du moins à partir de 597, l'acceptation de «l'ordre babylonien», et qu'il a lui-même agi en conséquence. Jérémie déclare que telle a été la décision de Yahvé. Pourquoi Yahvé a-t-il pris cette décision? Parce qu'il veut punir Juda, à cause de sa rupture de l'alliance, et qu'il a chargé Babylone d'exécuter le châtimement, répondent, par exemple, J. Bright et R. Martin-Achard⁽⁶³⁾. Voilà une réponse que les textes n'étaient pas. En effet, rien dans les textes ne suggère que la soumission à la Babylonie soit le châtimement de la rupture de son alliance avec Yahvé, voire d'une quelconque autre faute de Juda. Une telle interprétation est même exclue du fait que, d'après Jr 27,11, la soumission à la Babylonie est une obligation de tous les peuples, et pas seulement de Juda. Elle n'est pas un châtimement. Bien au contraire, elle est la condition de la paix et du bien-être. C'est le refus de la soumission qui

⁽⁵⁸⁾ (Tout) le «reste» (*š'ryt*) de Juda (40,11.15; 42,15.19; 43,5; 44,14.28), tout le reste du peuple qui était à Miçpa (41,10.16), tout le reste (42,2; cf. aussi 42,1).

⁽⁵⁹⁾ LOHFINK, «Die Gattung», 319-347.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ STIPP, *Jeremia im Parteienstreit*, 130-284.

⁽⁶¹⁾ POHLMANN, *Studien zum Jeremiabuch*, 183-197.

⁽⁶²⁾ R. P. CARROLL, *The Book of Jeremiah. A Commentary* (OTL; London 1986) 670.

⁽⁶³⁾ J. BRIGHT, *Jeremiah* (AB 21; Garden City, NY 1965) CI et CIX; MARTIN-ACHARD, «Ésaïe et Jérémie», 222. R. E. CLEMENTS, *Jeremiah* (Interpretation; Atlanta 1988) tantôt suggère l'idée de châtimement (163 et 204), tantôt reconnaît que les textes ne donnent aucune raison (162).

constitue une faute que Yahvé punira sévèrement. En un mot, la soumission à Babylone est, d'après Jérémie, une décision souveraine de Yahvé dont il ne donne aucune raison⁽⁶⁴⁾.

Conclusions

Les temps d'Isaïe et de Jérémie se ressemblent à bien des égards. Juda était, du temps d'Isaïe, sous la domination de l'Assyrie; du temps de Jérémie, environ un siècle plus tard, sous la domination d'une autre grande puissance mésopotamienne, Babylone, qui avait pris entre temps la relève de l'Assyrie. Dans les deux cas, Juda caressait l'espoir de se débarrasser de l'emprise étrangère, comptant pour cela sur l'alliance avec l'Égypte, la grande puissance rivale des «super-puissances» mésopotamiennes.

Isaïe et Jérémie ont beaucoup en commun, le plus fondamental relevant de leur «fonction prophétique» elle-même⁽⁶⁵⁾. Ils se présentent, l'un et l'autre, comme les fidèles messagers ou porte-parole de Yahvé, disant ce que Yahvé leur ordonne de dire, par les moyens de son choix, et cela dans tous les domaines. Les positions qu'ils expriment en matière de politique internationale se présentent donc comme étant celles de Yahvé lui-même.

Isaïe et Jérémie réprouvent l'un et l'autre les alliances avec l'Égypte et l'Assyrie. Dans le livre de Jérémie, on en trouve la condamnation explicite à deux reprises (Jr 2,18-19.36-37). La condamnation de l'alliance avec l'Égypte est fréquente dans le livre d'Isaïe (Is 18,1-2.4; 20,1-6; 30,1-5.6-8; 31,1.3). À ses yeux, l'alliance avec l'Assyrie devait être tout aussi condamnable que l'alliance avec l'Égypte. L'un et l'autre prophètes donnent une seule raison, d'ordre religieux. Jérémie l'esquisse à peine (2,18-19): les alliances équivalent à abandonner ('zb) Yahvé. Dans sa dénonciation de l'alliance avec l'Égypte, Isaïe développe cette raison et en tire les dernières conséquences: en s'alliant avec l'Égypte, Juda remplace Yahvé par l'Égypte; il choisit l'Égypte et sa force militaire pour dieu.

En revanche, Isaïe et Jérémie ont des positions diamétralement opposées en ce qui concerne l'attitude à adopter à l'égard de la puissance dominante.

Avec une cohérence sans faille, Isaïe veut la rupture de l'alliance qui soumet Juda à l'Assyrie. Son désaccord avec les responsables de la politique officielle de Jérusalem, du moins en 705-701, porte uniquement sur les moyens de réussir l'affranchissement de la tutelle assyrienne. Alors qu'Isaïe

⁽⁶⁴⁾ STIPP, *Jeremia im Parteienstreit*, 223-224 et 272. Dans les textes primitifs, la soumission à Babylone n'avait pas de limite temporelle. Celle-ci a été introduite plus tard. On la trouve dans le TM de 27,7. 29,10 donne une durée de soixante-dix ans. En 25,11-12, seul le TM met les soixante-dix ans d'esclavage de Juda en rapport avec le roi de Babylone; Y. GOLDMAN, *Prophétie et royauté au retour de l'exil*. Les origines littéraires de la forme massorétique du livre de Jérémie (OBO 118; Freiburg Schweiz-Göttingen 1992).

⁽⁶⁵⁾ J'emploie prophétique ou prophète dans leur sens courant, sans préjuger des termes qui désignaient les fonctions d'Isaïe et de Jérémie, de leur temps; A. G. AULD, «Prophets and Prophecy in Jeremiah and Kings», *ZAW* 96 (1984) 66-82; B. VAWTER, «Were the Prophets *nabî's*», *Bib* 66 (1985) 206-220.

attendent cette réussite de «l'inactivité et du repos, de la tranquillité et de l'assurance» qui découlent de la confiance absolue en Yahvé, les Judéens espèrent l'obtenir par la puissance égyptienne, par leur cavalerie et par le système défensif de Jérusalem. Le désaccord est radical et irréductible.

Faute d'indications, il est difficile de savoir si Isaïe était une voix isolée ou s'il représente une position politique qui était partagée par d'autres. Vu non seulement le peu d'informations dont on dispose, mais aussi la distance temporelle, il est risqué de juger de la valeur politique de sa position. Cela dit, il est douteux que l'appel à la neutralité lors de la guerre syro-éphraïmite fût réaliste, car on voit mal que l'Assyrie eût permis à Juda de rester en dehors de son emprise. L'espoir du prophète de réussir la révolte contre l'Assyrie, en 705-701, sans recourir aux moyens militaires ni étrangers ni propres manquait entièrement de réalisme. L'image d'Isaïe qui ressort de ses oracles est celle du témoin de Yahvé, «le trois fois saint», qui a passé sa vie à intervenir dans la politique de Juda au nom de son expérience ou de son intuition de la souveraineté absolue de Yahvé. Dans le jargon moderne, ses positions en matière de politique étrangère relèvent de la pure idéologie: elles sont d'une cohérence implacable, et d'un irréalisme absolu⁽⁶⁶⁾.

Il en va tout autrement de Jérémie. On ne trouve pas chez lui la cohérence d'Isaïe. Curieusement, la raison de son opposition à l'alliance avec l'Égypte et l'Assyrie, qui paraît absolue, ne vaut plus dès qu'il s'agit de la Babylonie. Bien au contraire, toutes les nations, y compris Juda, doivent se soumettre à la Babylonie. Cette obligation est d'autant plus surprenante que Jérémie ne dit pas pourquoi Yahvé l'a imposée. En réalité, la position de Jérémie représente l'un des deux choix politiques alors possibles à Jérusalem. Nombre de ses concitoyens, dont les membres des grandes familles auxquelles son livre l'associe, ont fait le même choix, sans doute, par simple réalisme politique. On les appelle d'habitude le parti pro-babylonien. Conscients du déséquilibre des forces, ils prônent la soumission à la Babylonie sans doute pour sauver le royaume et ses institutions. On mentionnera la famille du scribe Shaphan, dont l'un des membres, Godolias, a été nommé gouverneur par l'occupant babylonien. En fait, Jérémie agit et parle comme un membre du parti pro-babylonien, et tout le monde le considère comme tel. Les autres partisans du *statu quo* collaborent avec lui⁽⁶⁷⁾ et le protègent⁽⁶⁸⁾. Leurs adversaires, les partisans de la révolte, profitant du fait qu'ils sont au pouvoir, l'arrêtent pour haute trahison: essayer de passer à l'ennemi (37,11-16) ou démoraliser les troupes (38,1-6), selon le récit. Fi-

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Ceux qui qualifient d'utopique la politique des «prophètes classiques» me semblent avoir raison en ce qui concerne les prises de position d'Isaïe en matière de politique étrangère; voir l'état de la question de ALBREKTSON, «Prophecy and Politics in the Old Testament», 45-56.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Baruch de la famille de Maḥseiah est le collaborateur de Jérémie (32,12; 36,1-32; 43,1-3; 45,1-5). Il lit le rouleau dans la salle de Gemaryahu, fils de Shaphan (36,10). Gemaryahu est l'un des princes qui essaient de dissuader le roi de brûler le rouleau (36,25). Son fils, Mikayehu, informe les princes de la teneur du rouleau (36,11-13). Elasa, un autre fils de Shaphan, est l'un des porteurs de la lettre de Jérémie aux exilés (29,3).

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Ahiqam lui sauve la vie (26,24).

nalement, les Babyloniens lui accordent un traitement de faveur, vraisemblablement, en récompense des services rendus à leur cause.

À la différence de la position d'Isaïe, la position de Jérémie était réaliste. La catastrophe provoquée par la révolte a montré, après coup, qu'elle était la bonne, ou du moins la moins mauvaise. En l'occurrence, le réalisme coïncidait avec ce que Jérémie croyait être la volonté de Yahvé. Jérémie appartenait-il au parti pro-babylonien? D'après ceux qui sont partis en Égypte, Jérémie s'opposait à leur démarche à l'instigation de Baruch (43,1-3)⁽⁶⁹⁾. Le parti pro-babylonien s'est-il servi du prophète de son vivant, comme le fera la communauté juive de Babylone après sa mort? Voilà des questions pour lesquelles on n'a pas de réponse. Il paraît, par contre, certain que les traditions relatives au rôle de Jérémie dans les derniers événements du royaume de Juda ont été transmises et développées par les cercles pro-babyloniens⁽⁷⁰⁾. Les faits leur avaient donné raison; leur version de l'histoire fut « canonisée ».

École Biblique et Archéologique
Française de Jérusalem
POB 19053
Jérusalem

Francolino J. GONÇALVES

⁽⁶⁹⁾ W. BRUEGGEMANN, «The "Baruch Connection": Reflections on Jer 43:1-7», *JBL* 113 (1993) 405-420.

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